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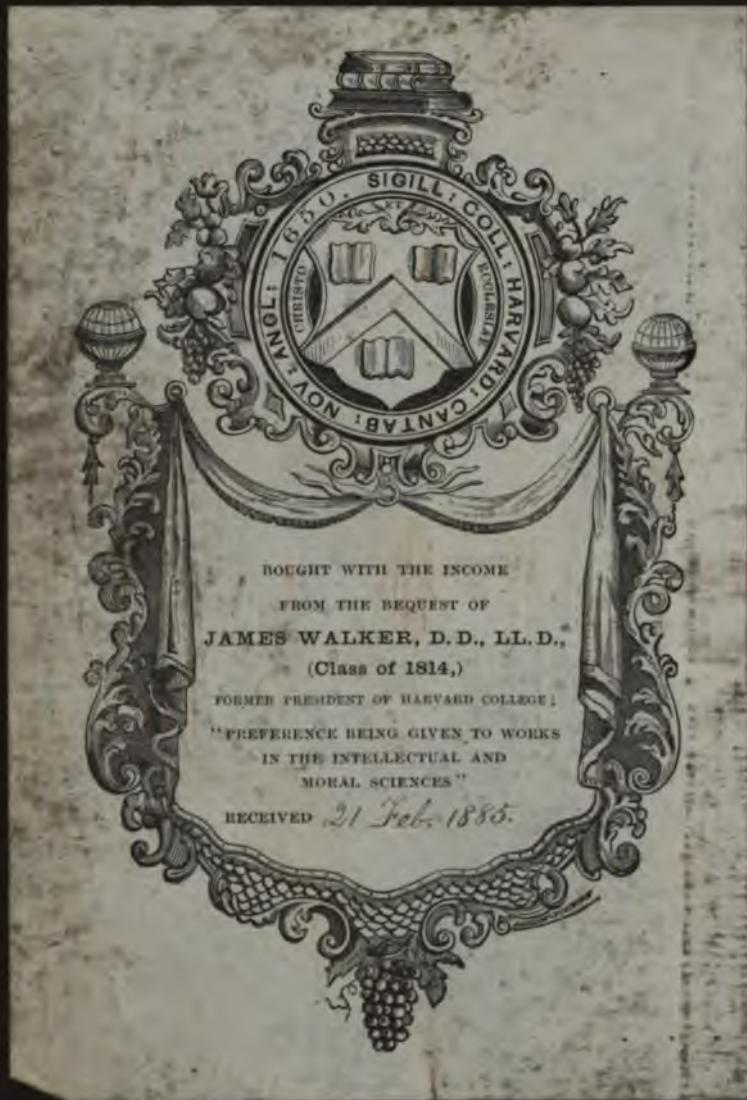
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JOAQUÍN DE VALDÉS  
ON THE MATTHEW'S GOSPEL  
AND  
BOEHMER'S LIVES OF THE  
TWIN-BROTHERS VALDÉS

AND  
BOEHMER'S LIVES OF THE  
TWIN-BROTHERS VALDÉS

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*DANIELIS ROGERIJ EPIGRAMMA IN  
TUMULUM JO. JUELLI.*

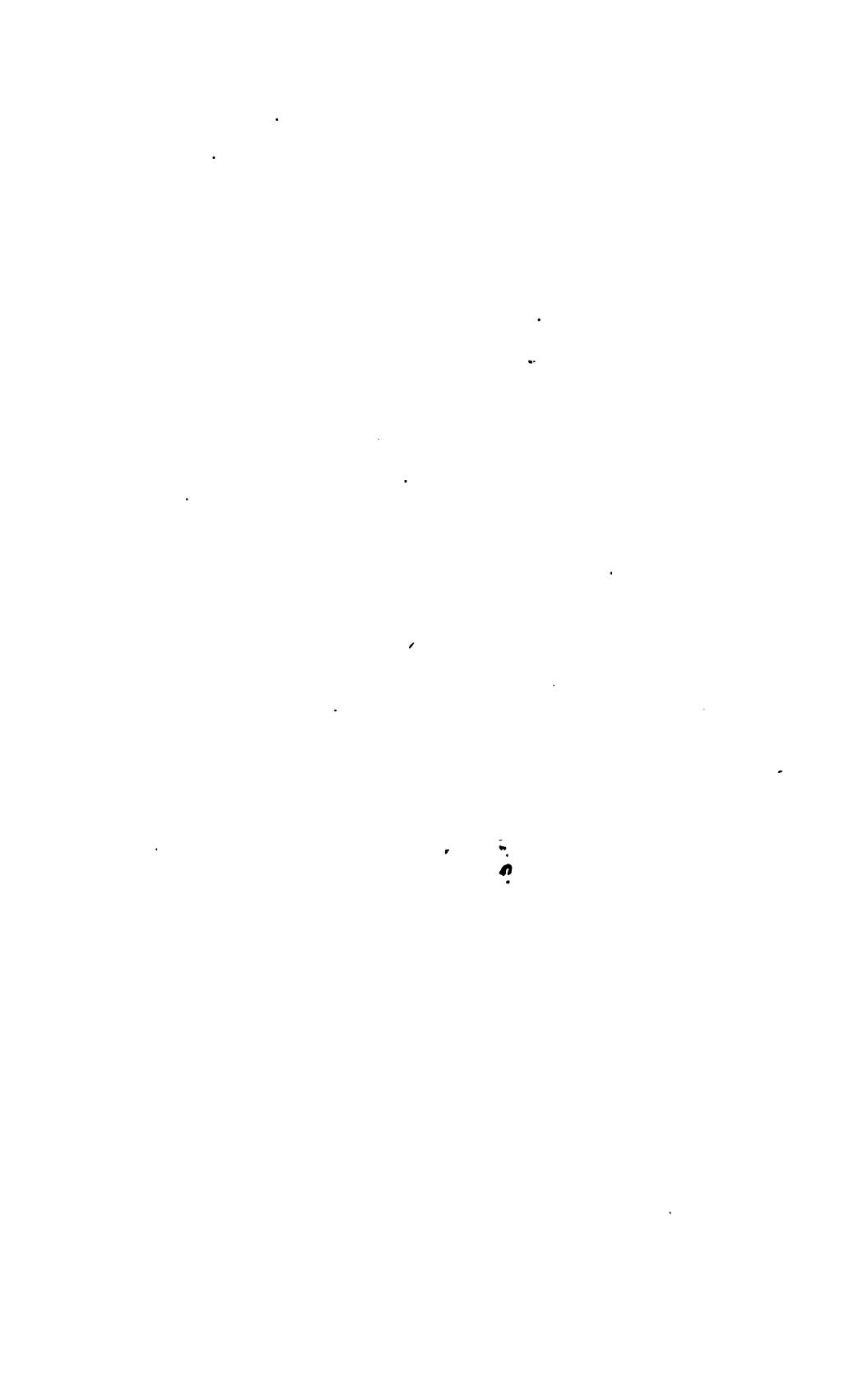
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DE VARIARUM REGIONUM PURIORIBUS THEOLOGIS.

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Prædicet assiduò divinum Martyra Tuscus :  
Calvinumq. suum Gallia in astra ferat.  
Jactet et extollat Germana Melancthona tellus :  
Lutherum et parili semper honore vehat.  
Nec Bucere tuos obliviscatur honores  
Bonna, tuo summum nomine nacta decus.  
Zuinglius Helvetijs æternum vivat in oris ;  
Et Bullingerum gens Tigurina colat.  
Inclyta Sarmaticas sit Alasci fama per urbes :  
Boihemis Hussus concelebretur agris.  
Clara sit Hemmingi Danis industria terris :  
Illustris Scotica Knoxius extet humo.  
*Valdesio Hispanus scriptore superbiat orbis :*  
Hyperium et meritò carmine Belga citet.  
Quæq. sui regio nomen doctoris honoret,  
In præceptores sitq. benigna suos.  
At Doctore suo te gaudeat Anglia felix,  
Vnum pro cunctis teq. Juelle canat.

*Extracted from Lawrence Humphrey's "Life and Death of John Jewell, Bishop of Salisbury," &c. Published by John Day, A.D. 1573.*



JUÁN DE VALDÉS'  
 COMMENTARY  
 UPON THE  
 GOSPEL OF ST. MATTHEW:

*NOW FOR THE FIRST TIME TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH,  
 AND NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED IN ENGLISH.*

BY JOHN T. BETTS.



*LIVES OF THE TWIN BROTHERS,  
 JUÁN AND ALFONSO DE VALDÉS.*

BY EDWARD BOEHMER, D.D., PH.D.

*WITH INTRODUCTION BY THE EDITOR.*

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LONDON:  
 TRÜBNER & CO., LUDGATE HILL.  
 1882.

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**BALLANTYNE, HANSON AND CO.**  
**EDINBURGH AND LONDON**

## PREFACE.

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ALTHOUGH the Editor, in his desire to popularise the knowledge of Juán de Valdés and of his works, has published two lives of this author, the one written by Wiffen in 1865, and the other by Boehmer in 1882, setting forth all that was known of him at the respective periods when they were issued; and although the Editor's prefaces to Valdés' "CX Divine Considerations," to Valdés' minor works, his "XVII Opuscules," to Valdés' "Spiritual Milk for Christian Children," and to Professor Boehmer's "Lives of the Twin Brothers Juán and Alfonso de Valdés," have brought much similar matter before the public, still it has never previously been made known what a benefactor his Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Germany became to Christendom when he was pleased to accede to the Professor's request to be released from twelve yet remaining years of professorial duties, by constituting him emeritus professor of the University of Strasburg, in order that he might devote his life to the prosecution of his researches and his publications, thereby creating for him that leisure, which has been so successfully employed in that Valdésian mine, the Aulic Library at Vienna, and especially in that rich vein of it, the Emperor Maximilian the Second's papers. In announcing Professor Boehmer's "Lives of all the Spanish Reformers," the "Bibliotheca Wiffeniana," now in course of publication, in English,

which will supply scholars with the history of every known edition of their works, the Editor again proclaims the grace shown by the Emperor of Germany to Dr. Boehmer to have been one virtually shown to the Christians of all countries, a declaration proved in the instance of the publication of the "Commentary upon the Gospel of St. Matthew," already published in Spanish in Madrid, and now about to be brought before that mighty host, the English-speaking Christians all over the world. The works of Valdés hitherto published by the Editor are deposited in very many of the national and university libraries in Europe and in America.

The Editor gives the subjoined extracts from Boehmer's preface to his Spanish edition of this recently published commentary, as those which will specially interest the English reader.

Valdés' Introduction, it will be observed, was written for a gentlewoman; she was Julia Gonzaga, the Duchess of Trajetto, his pupil. She, illustrious by birth, was still more so by her mental and personal endowments; her social circle was in its moral tone unsullied, and far too enlightened to please Paul IV. and Pius V. Were they to be enumerated who constituted it, the names would be adduced of Vittoria Colonna and of Isabella Manrique, of Cardinals Pole and Morone, of Carnesecchi, of Marc Antonio Flaminio; and if Valdés be named last, he is not so because least, though the individuals indicated rank as the most distinguished members of the aristocracy of Italy of their period.

JOHN T. BETTS.

PEMBURY, KENT, May 1882.

## EXTRACTS

### FROM PROFESSOR BOEHMER'S PREFACE TO THE SPANISH VERSION.

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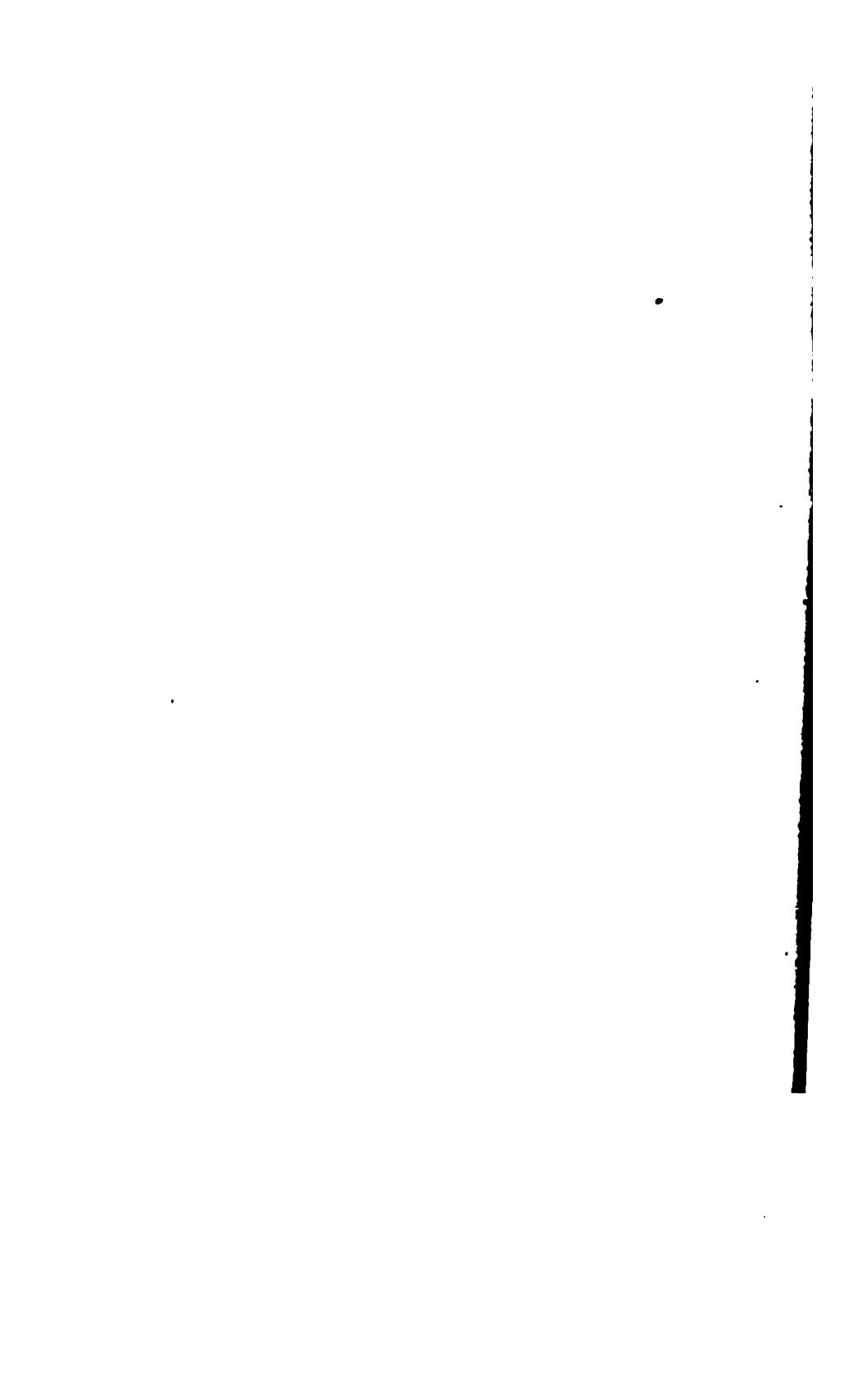
THE manuscript of this "Commentary upon St. Matthew's Gospel" is preserved in the Aulic Library at Vienna. It is anonymous, but Michael Denis, in cataloguing the MSS. of that library, recognised the author as Juán de Valdés, and indicated it in the year 1794 in his catalogue (vol. i. part 1, col. 1994). He knew Valdés' Commentaries upon St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans and upon the First Epistle to the Corinthians, which were published in the sixteenth century. Nevertheless (says Dr. Boehmer), we, who have written upon Juán de Valdés, including Don Fernando Caballero in his fourth volume of "The Illustrious Natives of Cuença" (1875), were all ignorant of the existence of this his Commentary upon Matthew. Interrogatories previously addressed to competent persons resident at Vienna in reference to Spanish evangelical writings had been fruitless, until Herr Joseph Lampel, in a letter to my honoured colleague Professor Cunitz of the University of Strasburg, informed me that the new catalogue of manuscripts, excepting the Greek and Oriental (*manuscriptorum præter Græcos et Orientales*), in vol. vii., published in 1875, contained Valdés' Commentary upon Matthew. I, upon examination of the MS. itself, found it actually to be, beyond all doubt, a work of Juán de Valdés, and one of his latest.

Herr Joseph Lampel, by personal research in the library, confirmed my conjecture that this manuscript formed one of a collection already made in the time of Maximilian II., and Valdés' "Commentary upon the First Epistle to the Corinthians" is dedicated to the Emperor Maximilian II. Thanks to the liberality of the Austrian Government and to the favour of that of Germany, I was enabled to copy it at Strasburg.

Possibly the codex was written prior to the author's death in 1541; but it is not autograph, for the orthographic rules laid down by Valdés in his "Dialogo de la Lengua" (printed at Madrid in 1737, 1860, and 1873), are not obeyed. The writing is that of a skilled penman, and two correctors of that period have revised the manuscript. I transcribed it under dictation of the gentlewoman who turned Valdés' "CX Considerations" into German, for she, being accustomed to the complicated style of that author, found no difficulty in the commentary, which is dedicated to a gentlewoman—to Giulia de Gonzaga.

In the "Introduction to the Gospels," we read that after Valdés had expounded the Psalms, he finished his Commentaries on the Epistles by St. Paul and by St. Peter; and in his Commentary upon St. Matthew xxiv. 37-44, he remits himself to his exposition of the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, and to the First Epistle of Peter. All his commentaries upon the epistles are lost, save those upon the Epistle to the Romans and the First Epistle to the Corinthians, which were reprinted in one volume in Madrid in 1856, by Don Luis Usoz i Rio, from the edition of the year 1557. [These are now translated into English by the Editor, and advertised as about to be published in two volumes.] We do not know how far he was able to

continue his Commentary upon the Gospels; it may be inferred from a note appended to the MS. in his Commentary upon Matthew iv. 1-4, that he had begun to comment upon St. Mark. At page 450, commenting upon Matthew xxv. 31-46, he says he will show something in his Commentary upon the Gospel of Luke, vii. 37-50; from which it is not to be inferred that he had not then written anything upon that gospel, but merely that he had not published anything. However, it is very probable that when he wrote upon Matthew, he had not written upon the other evangelists.



## JUAN DE VALDÉS' INTRODUCTION TO THE GOSPELS.

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THE greatest testimony to Christian truth is this: that when man, in things that affect it, does not exert in any way either his prudence or his human wisdom, he succeeds; and when he does exert them, then he fails. I have learned this truth by personal experience in many things, and the latest instance in which I have seen it is this: that had I, when I purposed to edify you and to edify myself in relation to that which affects Christian faith and Christian life by means of the Holy Scriptures, followed the judgment of my prudence and human reason, I should in the first place have occupied myself with the Gospels, which are the histories of Christ, and I should have sent them to you; because this Scripture is commonly held to be easier of interpretation and comprehension than any other; then I should have occupied myself with the Epistles of St. Paul and of St. Peter, and I should have sent them to you, for that there is, so to say, in them, the practice of Christian life with the confirmation of Christian faith; and afterwards I should have occupied myself with the Psalms, and I should have sent them to you, because they are commonly held to be a Scripture very difficult of interpretation and of comprehension. And had I done so, I should have greatly erred in relation both to yourself and to myself, for neither should I have succeeded either in translating, or in interpreting, the Gospels so well, not

having passed through the Epistles; nor the Epistles, not having passed through the Psalms; neither would you have been so capable of reading the Gospels, had you not been instructed in reading the Epistles; neither in the reading of the Epistles, had you not been exercised in the reading of the Psalms.

For the Psalms being based upon the obligation of the human race according to the true understanding of the law of Moses; and the Epistles being based upon the obligation of Christian regeneration according to the true understanding of the gospel of Christ; and the Gospels being based upon Christian regeneration itself, and upon the expression of the life and words of the Son of God Himself, Jesus Christ our Lord, there is no doubt but that for me to translate and to interpret, and for you to understand and to relish, it was most suitable to take first the Psalms; for it is a fact that we are more capable of things affecting the obligation of the human race than of those which affect Christian regeneration, these latter being, as it were, contrary to our natural inclination, whilst those are peculiar to it; and then to take the Epistles before the Gospels, because it is likewise a fact that we are more capable of the conceptions and feelings which on Christian subjects the apostles of Christ had in relation to Christian regeneration, than of the conceptions and feelings which Christ Himself had on the same subject; for in relation to those of the apostles we can avail ourselves to a great extent of "*the book of consideration*,"\* assisted by personal experience, as indeed we do; whilst in relation to those of Christ we can avail ourselves of that book but little, for although to us, who accept the grace of the gospel, Christ communicates His own Spirit; through our incapacity, it is not in such abundance that we are enabled thoroughly to comprehend, by our own experience, all the conceptions and feelings of Christ which we find written in the Gospels,

\* *Vide Consideration LIV.*, p. 367, of J. T. Betts' translation of Valdés' CX. Divine Considerations.

and thus, although we succeed in some, we scarcely attain to do so in others.

So that I have great reason to say that we succeed when we do not regulate ourselves in Christian matters by the decision of prudence and human reason; and that we err when we do regulate ourselves by it; holding this to be the surest token of Christian truth, being certainly assured that were it not thus true, just the opposite would be experimentally realised. And because I desire that you should thoroughly comprehend the necessity which is laid upon the man, who devotes himself to the Holy Scriptures, not to follow the order which I should have followed had I been counselled by human prudence, but that which I have followed without looking at it or thinking about it, setting apart the Psalms, which, as I have stated, follow the obligation of the human race imposed by the law of Moses; and taking the Epistles and the Gospels, which, as I have stated, follow the obligation of Christian regeneration imposed by the gospel of Christ. I state that there is yet another thing from which it appears that the Christian ought first to attend to the reading of the Epistles before the reading of the Gospels, and it is this: that the reading of the Gospels ill understood is just as perilous to cause a man to pretend to be righteous, and thus to attain salvation and eternal life by his works, disregarding faith; as is the reading of the Epistles, ill understood, perilous in causing a man to pretend to be righteous, and thus to attain salvation and eternal life through faith, disregarding good works. Since it is a fact that unregenerate man is more inclined to justify himself by his works, without his faith, than to think of justifying himself by his faith, without his works; and it being likewise a fact that the foundation of the Christian Church is Christian faith, acceptance of the grace of the gospel, and works are hence good in proportion as he who does them is well based in Christian faith; for since St. Paul says, "*Without faith it is impossible to please God,*" it is clear

that the difficulty into which a man may fall by careless reading of the Epistles is less than in the careless reading of the Gospels, since he more easily falls away from the Christian foundation by reading and misapprehending the Gospels than by reading and misapprehending the Epistles. And although I have no fear of your fall into either of these two difficulties, nevertheless it is right to put you upon your guard, that in reading the Epistles you be so based in Christian faith as not to disregard Christian works; and that in reading the Gospels you so strive after Christian life, Christian habits, and Christian works as not to forget Christian faith. And because it might be, that that should occur to you, which occurs to many, who make of the Gospels a law, and aim at self-justification by fulfilling the doctrine of Christ, and thus they never find peace in their consciences, because they never know that they are satisfied, for in fact they do not satisfy, I warn you that you have to avail yourself of the doctrine of Christ as instruction in Christian life. For you have to know that just as a peasant who has been adopted by the Emperor as his son would have instruction propounded and given him, whereby he should learn how personally to regulate himself so as to acquire the habits of a child of the Emperor, living dutifully and decorously as the Emperor's son, so you, from being a daughter of Adam, are selected for a daughter of God; the doctrine of Christ which is in the Gospels is propounded and given to you, that you may learn and know by it how you should regulate yourself so as to acquire the habits of a daughter of God, living as is the duty of a daughter of God, and observing the decorum of a daughter of God. Which decorum, although it is very well expressed in Christ's words, you will nevertheless learn much better by considering the works of Christ Himself. And in this I speak from personal experience, having experienced in myself that although those divine words of Christ, "*Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart,*" are very effective in me, still the consideration of

Christ's meekness and humility throughout His whole life, and especially in His passion and in His death, is beyond all comparison more effective. For I assure you that this consideration brings me down to this, that were it given me to select that which I should most desire, the meekness and humility of Christ, or all the other glorious things that were seen in Christ, all taken together, whilst He walked here among men, I would select the meekness and the humility that I see in Christ; so much do they appear to me to be annexed, and, as it were, peculiar and natural, to the Christian, in this state of passibility and mortality. And here it is opportune to give you this caution; that it is for you to aim at imitation of those things in Christ which affect meekness, humility, love, and obedience to God, striving to excel in meekness, in humility, in love, and in obedience, as you shall know that Christ did; never holding yourself to be perfect in any of these things until you recognise that in yourself, which you shall recognise in Christ. I do not say what you do know, for know assuredly what you do know is very little compared with what you will know, when you shall have formed close intimacy with Christ, having well examined all His words, and well considered all His works.

Besides this, it is well that you should know that all that Christ said and taught does not affect all persons nor all times. For it is so that many things (of those of which He spoke) were necessary in those times, and would be injurious in these; such as the observance of Moses' law, to the observance of which Christ's command to the lepers, that they should offer for their cleansing that which had been commanded by the law of Moses, is addressed; and to the same purport are those words of Christ in Matt. xxiii. 2, "*The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat;*" and those in Matt. v. 17, "*I am not come to destroy the law but to fulfil it;*" and because there are many things that Christ said that are not generally applicable to all persons; as, for instance, that which He said

in Matt. xix. 21 to the Jewish youth, “*If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast,*” or that which He said to the Scribes and Pharisees in John v. 39, “*Search the Scriptures;*” and when conversing with His disciples, in John xiv. 26, He said, “*But the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things;*” whence it appears that some words were addressed to Christ’s disciples, whilst others were addressed to those who were in the school of Moses, or in a philosophical school, but who had not entered Christ’s school.\*

You will avail yourself of this caution both to know that you are not to think aught addressed to you, save that which Christ addressed to His disciples, and that you have this only to apply to yourself; and to understand, that you have only to apply to these times the things that

\* It is clear that Valdés, when he religiously translated and interpreted Holy Scripture, and sent his translations and commentaries to a pious lady,<sup>1</sup> did not in any way desire to intimate that it is beyond the competency of all Christians to search the sacred text. What he desires to enforce is, that the principal and essential thing consists in the participation of God’s Spirit. “*For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God;*” —“*The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God*” (1 Cor. ii. 10, 11). With relation to the former passage of St. Paul, Valdés adds, they who set themselves to search out the mysteries of God without the Spirit of God, realise the experience of those who set themselves to admire the perfection of objects without the light of the sun.

See, too, what the same author says when commenting upon Christ’s words: “*Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God*” (Matt. xxi.) Had they understood them, they would not have erred, for it is most certain that they teach him, who understands them, every virtue. “*And he teaches in relation to the parable of the talents*” (Matt. xxv.), that to form in our minds a right opinion of God and of Christ, we ought to apply ourselves to read the Scriptures written by the Holy Spirit, which must be interpreted by the same Spirit with which they were written. Men who read the Holy Scriptures without the Christian spirit, seeing that almost all the piety of saints under the law was based upon fear, proceed to canonise fear.

The unique means, then, for avoiding every error, is for the Christian always to search the Scriptures guided by the Holy Spirit, as well those of the Old Testament, to which Christ peculiarly referred, for that no part of the New had then been written, as also those which are contained in this latter.—EDUARD BOEHMER, Editor of the Spanish Original.

<sup>1</sup> Giulia Gonzaga.

square with Christian faith and with Christian life, passing lightly over everything else.

Now because Christ was wont to express and to set forth some of His conceptions by parables and similitudes, which cause those persons great difficulty who seek to make them square in everything with everything, I advise you never to think of doing so. I never have done so, and you would but lose your time; but rather occupy yourself in making each one square with the purpose that apparently Christ had in propounding it, and thus you will hit the mark. That Christ does not pretend in the parables that everything should square with everything appears from some which He Himself set forth; and if He did not make everything to square with every other thing, it would be a great indiscretion on our part were we to seek to make everything to square with every other thing.

An apparent discordance between the Evangelists has offended, and does offend, many, both as to the order of the history and as to the train of Christ's arguments, and so likewise in some other things, and hence they go on, labouring away to harmonise them. This task I have never taken up, nor does it appear to me that you ought to do so. For you should know that although I do not condemn the pious curiosity of these persons, I hold the Christian simplicity of those to be better, who take from each of the Evangelists what they give, and content themselves with this. As to the fundamentals of the gospel of Christ and of the Christian Church—that Christ is the Messiah, that He is the Son of God, that He died on the Cross, that He rose again, and that He lives—they all agree without the slightest discordance in the world. And this much I assure you as to myself—I think that I should have felt less satisfaction and that the Evangelists would have offended me more had they harmonised in everything, without any the least discrepancy, than finding them to be what I do find them; who are apparently discordant upon some things, as well because I rejoice

that my faith does not depend upon the Scriptures—nor is it based upon them, but it depends upon inspirations and experiences, and it is based upon them; just as was the faith of those Samaritans, who, after having seen Christ and heard Him speak, believing by inspiration and by experience, told the woman that they no longer believed because of her report, but from the experience which they had—as because I intelligently see that God's design in the Scriptures has been to give just so much light as may suffice to illumine those, who have inward inspirations, and not to give enough to enlighten human prudence, when men would fain understand Christian things, spiritual and divine, without inward inspirations. And thus I understand that the apparent discordance between the Evangelists is to those, who read with human prudence and natural light, that which Christ's abjectness and humility were to those, who contemplated Him with the same prudence and the same light: Christ's abjectness and humility caused these to stumble and to fall, beyond their power to rise, and to those the discordance that there is between the Evangelists makes them stumble and to fall, beyond their power to rise. And thus it comes to pass that Christ is always and in every way the stone of stumbling and rock of offence, even as St. Peter stated it had been prophesied concerning Him. And observe that what I understand as to the apparent discordance between the Evangelists, I understand likewise as to the apparent discordance there is in some of the authorities of the law and of the prophets quoted in the Gospels.

In the miracles which Christ wrought, you will consider His love, and you will have to avail yourselves of them to confirm your Christian faith, thinking thus: if Christ wrought temporal benefits upon those, who, trusting in Him, followed Him and commended themselves to Him—this not being His principal intention in coming into the world—how much better eternal benefits will He work on those, who, trusting in Him, shall follow after and

commend themselves to Him,—such being His principal intention in coming into the world.

In the passion and death of Christ you will consider His obedience to God, and you will avail yourself of it in order to bring yourself daily more to cleave, both in little and much, to what you shall know to be the will of God ; examining yourself as to whether you have adequate spirit to go through what Christ went through,—in the patience with which Christ bore and suffered the injuries and insults which were said and done to Him, without rendering evil for evil, without prejudicing any one ! you will consider His admirable meekness, and you will avail yourself of it, in order to imitate it, and in order to know that you have attained to so much of it, since you feel yourself to be incorporated into Christ.

And when you shall read what Christ says against the Scribes and Pharisees, reviling them, you will consider that those words issued from no carnal emotion, but from the impulse of the Spirit ; and you will avail yourself of this consideration in order never to allow yourself to be transported by your carnal affection to speak ill even of those, whom you shall know to be Scribes and Pharisees, opposed to the Christian faith, to the grace of the gospel, and to Christian life ; herein imitating Christ, holding ever the safer side, which is to be useful to all, without prejudicing any one.

In the submission wherewith Christ subjected Himself to men, even to the payment of tribute to them, being the Son of God, as though He had been mere man, you will consider His most profound humility ; considering that it would have been great humility had He, being the Son of God, humbled Himself to be man, in the highest grade and in the greatest dignity which can be thought of or imagined amongst men, and that it was the greatest, in humbling Himself to be man of the lowest possible grade amongst men : and you will avail yourself of this consideration in order to love humility ; and never to hold

yourself to be humble, until you know yourself to be inferior to every one upon earth, and that you rejoice in being held to be such and in being treated as such.

If, in reading Christ's transfiguration, you shall ascend Tabor with Him, to contemplate Him transfigured; and that there you would fain be transfigured with Him; then come down from Mount Tabor, and place yourself upon Mount Calvary, to contemplate Christ crucified; and if, being there, you should not feel as willing to be crucified with Christ, as you were on the other to be transfigured with Christ; know, that you were drawn by your own self-love and not by the love of Christ, and that consequently you love yourself more than Christ. You will ever make this same test, when contemplating things that are glorious in Christ, if the wish shall come upon you to be in them like unto Christ.

If, in reading the authorities of the law and of the prophets which are quoted in these Holy Scriptures, the desire should ever come upon you to go on comparing and examining them, know that you are moved by curiosity, and leave it alone; for I have ever done so in relation to those, in which I did not find Christian edification in such comparison and examination.

If, reading in St. John Christ's divine generation, you should be led to desire to understand in what manner the Son is begotten of the Father, and in what manner the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son; reflect upon your incapacity, and think that your temerity herein is no less than would be that of a worm, were it to seek to understand in what manner you were begotten in your mother's womb. You will think precisely thus, should the wish come upon you to know in what manner Christ was begotten in the womb of the most holy Virgin Mary.

When you shall read the rabid ferocity with which the rulers of the Jewish synagogue persecuted Christ—going the length of putting Him to a most cruel death, calling Him impious and inimical to God, He having come to

make them friends of God and righteous, and to give them eternal life—you will reflect upon what incongruities men fall when they allow themselves to be blinded by their passions; and how little any men are to be trusted, however commanding their positions; and you will avail yourself of this consideration to keep your mind constantly free from all passion, and not to trust any man in Christian matters, spiritual and divine, however elevated and eminent he may be; lest that should hit you, “*Cursed is the man that trusteth in man;*”\* being restrained by that which happened to the Jewish nation, who, trusting to those who were distinguished and eminent amongst them in religion, shouted loudly for Christ’s crucifixion.

When you shall read of the unbelief and incredulity, of the ignorance and of the blindness, in which Christ’s disciples were during all the time He was with them, you will reflect upon the manner in which the eternal Father treated His only-begotten Son, whilst He lived as man amongst men—depriving Him even of the satisfaction, which it would have been to Him, to see His disciples spiritual and Christian, as they were after His ascension; and you will avail yourself of this consideration to refrain from the pretension that God should show you the love that He has for you, in granting you even spiritual gratifications—to refrain from the pretension of His vouchsafing you power and courage wherewith to pass through the bodily and spiritual trials which shall present themselves to you in this present life.

And if in reading certain of Christ’s utterances involving predestination, as in that of John x. 28, “*Nor shall any one pluck them out of My hand;*” should it occur to you to desire to understand how predestination can be compatible with freewill; and how it could be that Judas should be compelled to sell Christ and be condemned for doing so; I would remind you of what Christ said to St. Peter, because he would fain have known what did not

\* Jer. xvii. 5.

concern him—" *What is that to thee? follow thou Me*" (John xxi. 22). Finally, you shall avail yourself of these very words whenever you shall be assaulted by anything awakening curiosity in you, in matters not affecting you—as well those which shall spring from this devout reading, as those which shall daily occur to you. And rest assured that both in reading these Holy Scriptures, as likewise in dealing with all Christian things, spiritual and divine, simplicity greatly profits, whilst curiosity greatly damages; it ought to be extirpated from the minds of Christians, surrendering to the simplicity that is peculiar and natural to regeneration. And thus as it will be profitable to you to be warned against curiosity in those words, "*What is that to thee? follow thou Me*," so likewise it will be profitable to you to be warned by other expressions of Christ like that, against other influences by which you will be combated. Thus, should you be combated by fear, or by despair, as well in things temporal as in things eternal, remember those words of Christ in Matthew xiv. 31, "*Wherefore didst thou doubt?*" and of that in Luke viii. 25, "*Where is your faith?*" If vindictively affected, remember those in Luke ix. 55, "*Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.*" If in relation to the possession of this world's goods, in Luke xii. 14, "*Who made Me a judge over you?*"

And if in reading the Christian perfection particularly described in St. Matthew, in chapters v., vi., vii., it should present itself to you as so elevated that you should begin to despair of ever attaining to it, and might be tempted to desert it, remember those words of Christ (Mark ix. 23), "*All things are possible to him that believeth,*" and with them you will rest assured of this truth, that although he, who has not Christian faith, finds it impossible to bring himself up to so high a perfection—for it is impossible for him to love God more than he loves himself, and to love his neighbour as he loves himself—yet to you, who have Christian faith, it is possible;

because Christian faith has incorporated you into Christ; and incorporated into Him, you can say with St. Paul, in Phil. iv. 13, "*I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me,*" and I can do that which Paul could. And thus you will go on committing to memory certain of Christ's utterances, wherewith to be put upon your guard how to repress every affection with which you shall be assaulted, being ever attent to comprehend that perfection in which you are comprehended, by incorporation into Christ. Incorporated into Christ, by acceptance of the grace of the gospel and by baptism, you are dead as to the world, whilst you are raised and live as to God; your predicament being identical with Christ's; for God does not look upon you as to what you are in yourself, but as to what you are in Christ.

Be it your aim to live as dead to the world and to all that is in the world, passing through it as though you were really and effectively dead; and to live as risen again unto God, so that, living in this present life as dead and risen again, you begin to live a life very similar to that which you have to live throughout eternity, after the general resurrection. And know that in proportion as your life shall be conformed to that, to that extent you may believe that you have better comprehended that perfection in which, incorporated into Christ, you are comprehended, being in all and everything very like to Christ. And when you would examine how much you have comprehended and attained of this perfection, you will consider how firm and constant you would find yourself, were you constrained to suffer, for Christ's sake, the ignominy and confusion, the torment and the grief, that Christ suffered for you; for know that to this firmness and constancy you have to bring yourself—it being your aim, that when you appear at God's tribunal, you may do so with great firmness and constancy, because of your incorporation into Christ, and that you have no cause for shame and confusion for yourself personally.

It were well that all your exercises and all your studies, and more especially this of the doctrine and life of Christ, which you will read in these Scriptures, were directed to this end; ever with prayer to God, that He may favour you and me, with His divine grace, to such degree, that the peculiar image of His only-begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord may be seen in us.

In this translation I have followed the Greek text, just as I did in the translation of the Epistles, distinguishing the words which it appeared to me to be proper to add to render the Scripture more intelligible. And in the interpretations and explanations which I have written above the text, I have followed that which has appeared to me to be most conformable to what I feel and know of the truth of Christian faith and of the purity of Christian life; specially noting the spiritual edification, which, it occurred to me whilst writing, Christians, devoted to Christian life, might get from these Holy Scriptures, by imitating Christ; also ingenuously confessing my ignorance upon subjects, which through incapacity, or want of wit, I have been unable to fathom; it being my aim that the glory of Christ should thus be illustrated, as well by that which I have not understood, as by that which I have understood; and that thus Christians should be edified by the one as by the other—considering in the one what I am of myself, and considering in the other what I am by God's beneficence and favour—who drew me to Christ and incorporated me into Christ—and by Christ's munificence, who communicates to me what part He pleases of those divine treasures which His eternal Father has laid up in Him, in order that He should communicate them to us, who are incorporated into Him, in order that it may be seen and known in us and by us, whom God is, and whom the Son of God Jesus Christ our Lord is. To whom, with the Holy Spirit, be glory everlasting. Amen.

# THE GOSPEL OF ST. MATTHEW,

*FAITHFULLY TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK INTO  
SPANISH, AND EXPOUNDED ACCORDING TO THE  
LITERAL SENSE;*

WITH

MANY CONSIDERATIONS DRAWN FROM THE TEXT  
MOST NECESSARY TO CHRISTIAN LIFE.

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## CHAPTER I.

I. 1.—*The book of the generation of Jesus Christ,  
the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.*

Which is tantamount to saying: This is the book of the history of Jesus, the Messiah, promised in the law, who was the Son of David and of Abraham; for in Hebrew, that is called the book of the generation, which we call the book of the history. Here it has to be understood that “*Christ*” is synonymous with Anointed or Messiah, in order that it may be understood that St. Matthew purposed by the initiatory words to show that Jesus is the Messiah promised to the Jews, and given to all men in common; in order that all they, who shall accept Him, may obtain remission of sins, be reconciled to God, be friends of God and just with God, not by their own righteousness, but by Jesus Christ’s own righteousness. It is likewise to be understood, that because it was prophesied that the Messiah should be of the seed of David according to the flesh, and should be of the seed of Abraham, St. Matthew in the initiatory words calls Jesus Christ, the Son of David

and the Son of Abraham. St. Paul understands it to have been said to Abraham, "*In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*" (Gal. iii. 8; Gen. xxii. 18), understanding that in Jesus Christ, who should be born of the seed of Abraham, all the nations of the world should attain blessedness; and by blessedness, he understands remission of sins, reconciliation with God, justification and glorification; which blessedness they all enjoy in common, who accept the grace of the Gospel, and who, by believing, are incorporated into Christ. To David it was reiteratedly promised that his rule over God's people should be perpetuated in his descendants, and therefore it was most assuredly believed among the Jews that the Messiah should be of the seed of David, as indeed He was, in whom the rule over God's people is continued and perpetuated, it being the fact that Jesus Christ our Lord is the Head and King of Christians, who are the people of God, in relation to which I recollect having written a Consideration (No. cix. of Valdés' CX. Divine Considerations).

I. 1-17.—Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judah and his brethren; and Judah begat Perez and Zerah of Tamar; and Perez begat Hezron; and Hezron begat Ram; and Ram begat Amminadab; and Amminadab begat Nahshon; and Nahshon begat Salmon; and Salmon begat Boaz of Rahab; and Boaz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; and Jesse begat David the king. And David begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Uriah; and Solomon begat Rehoboam; and Rehoboam begat Abijah; and Abijah begat Asa; and Asa begat Jehoshaphat; and Jehoshaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Uzziah; and Uzziah begat Jotham; and Jotham begat

Ahaz; and Ahaz begat Hezekiah; and Hezekiah begat Manasseh; and Manasseh begat Amon; and Amon begat Josiah; and Josiah begat Jechoniah and his brethren, at the time of the carrying away to Babylon. And after the carrying away to Babylon, Jechoniah begat Shealtiel; and Shealtiel begat Zerubbabel; and Zerubbabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; and Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; and Eliud begat Eleazer; and Eleazer begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham unto David are fourteen generations; and from David unto the carrying away to Babylon fourteen generations; and from the carrying away to Babylon unto the Christ fourteen generations.

As to the peculiarities of the persons mentioned in this lineage of Christ, whether they agree with those named by St. Luke and with the histories of the Old Testament, I remit myself as to what others say, contenting myself with stating this, that those names, Tamar, Rahab, and Ruth, are women's names; that of her, spoken of as having previously been Uriah's wife, Bathsheba, is so likewise. Where it speaks of "*the carrying away*," the Greek word signifies the change of abode, the removal from one place to live in another; thus did it please St. Matthew to call the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, whither they were carried away by Nebuchadnezzar. Where he says Mary's husband, it is to be observed that St. Matthew calls him so, because that he was ordinarily so called.

I. 18-25.—Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on

this wise : When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife ; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus : for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, *Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel ; which, being interpreted, is, God with us.* Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife, and knew her not, till she had brought forth her first-born son, and he called his name Jesus.

Just as St. Matthew, in the preceding narration of the genealogy of Christ, designed to show that He, according to the flesh, is the son of David and of Abraham, so he here designs to show that Joseph took no part in the generation of Christ, it being the work of the Holy Spirit ; and just as the evangelist saw rightly in that instance that it was of no importance to bring the genealogy of Christ down to Mary, but only to Joseph, because their relation must at that time have been well known, so likewise here he saw that it was of no importance to call Joseph Mary's husband, nor to call Mary Joseph's wife,

since it clearly appeared to be his design to show that although they appeared to the world to be husband and wife, still they were not really and actually so.

In what manner Jesus Christ our Lord was conceived by the operation of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the most holy virgin is safer as matter of belief than of investigation; and therefore I remit myself to those who make a profession of investigating everything, I contenting myself with the belief that Christ's conception was by the operation of the Holy Spirit, man's seed in nowise interposing. In saying, "*For He shall save His people from their sins,*" he declares the reason why Christ should be called Jesus, which signifies salvation, for He was about to give salvation to the people of God, saving and delivering them from their sins. Where it is meant that Christ's proper office is to save us from our sins, us who belong to the people of God; they who do not believe that this salvation belongs to them are not the people of God, for they do not believe in Christ's salvation. That passage, "*Behold a virgin,*" &c., which is read in Isaiah vii. 14, where the evangelist means that the sign which was given to the Jews in these words, for the confirmation of that which had been promised to them, was to tell them that the time would come when a maid should become pregnant, and should bring forth a son, without losing her virginity; as though Isaiah should say: The same God, who promises to save you from your enemies who invade you, will bring it to pass that a virgin shall conceive and bear, without losing her virginity; and since He is powerful enough to do the former, think whether His power shall be adequate to do this latter. God is wont to help our unbelief by requiring us to trust Him in some things, promising us others of higher import and of greater marvel; although God, in giving this sign to Ahaz, did not design to help his faith, nay, He gave it in despite of Ahaz, who would not ask it. And, therefore, this sign was to the Jews the cause of their ultimate destruction and perdition.

That passage, “*Until she brought forth*,” &c., is to be understood in Hebrew idiom as intimating that he never knew her. Thus it is said in Psalm ex., “*Sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool*,” &c., where it is not to be understood that His enemies having been made His footstool He would have to rise from God’s right hand.

That expression “*first-born son*” involves excellence, and is likewise a Hebrew mode of speech, which speaks of the first born, meaning the only begotten.

## CHAPTER II.

II. 1-12.—Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judæa: for thus it is written by the prophet,\* *“And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule my people Israel.”* Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the East, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the

\* Micah v. 2.

star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

Upon this history many men have written many things, pretending to verify who these magi were; how many they were, and of what nature was the star; what period of time had elapsed from the time of Christ's birth until they came to Bethlehem, and likewise other things, which he will understand, who shall desire to know them, from those who have written about them; I however content myself by stating this, that the expression "*in the days of Herod*," is tantamount to saying, in the time of Herod the king; that "*magi*" is the same as learned men; that "*chief priests*" is the same as pontiffs or prelates; that "*scribes*" is the same as men of letters, or theologians. That to say "*where Christ should be born*," is tantamount to saying, where it was prophesied that the Messiah promised in the law should be born. The authority of the prophet Micah, whom they quote to prove that Christ had to be born in Bethlehem, is so much to the point, to establish the proposition adduced, that nothing could be better.

Bethlehem, apparently a small place, with but few inhabitants, was great, because our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Captain, Chief, and Governor of Israel, not of the carnal and outward, but of the spiritual and inward, He had to be born there. The prophet, according to the Hebrew text, speaks thus, "*But thou, Bethlehem-Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel*,"

and he adds, “*whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting;*” where the prophet notes the eternity of Christ, the Son of God. Bethlehem was, according to the prophet, small, as to its occupied dwellings, as having but few inhabitants; but Bethlehem, according to the quotation of the pontiffs and theologians of Jerusalem, was great, as the place of Christ’s birth.

Where he says “*warned,*” the Greek word signifies oracularly warned: he means that it was of divine operation. “*Their land,*” means the region or province of which they were natives.

II. 13-18.—And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt; and was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, “*Out of Egypt have I called my Son.*”\* Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, “*In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her chil-*

\* Hosea xi. 1.

*dren, and would not be comforted, because they are not.” \**

All this history is clear in itself; as to the difficulty that there is in the authorities which are quoted from sacred Old Testament Scripture, I remit myself to what they say who know more. Herod seeking Christ in order to kill Him, and not finding Him, brings before me that which I ordinarily see, that the flesh, the world, and human prudence are constantly seeking Christ, in His members, in order to kill Him, but they do not find Him, for they are ever groping in the dark; nay, it is ever so, that by how much the more Christ is persecuted, so much the more is His name illustrated. This has been so, is so, and ever will be so, as long as this world shall last.

Ramah is a Hebrew word signifying height. Rachel is generic and representative of all the Jewish people. Where the text says, “*because they are not*,” it means that the reason why Rachel would not be comforted in the death of her children, was, because she had lost them; they were dead; but the death was temporal.

II. 19-23.—But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child’s life [soul]. And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: And he came and dwelt in a city called

\* Jer. xxxi. 15.

Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "*He shall be called a Nazarene.*"

This history likewise is clear in the text. The expression, "the young child's soul," is worthy of consideration, as teaching that Holy Scripture is wont to speak of the soul as the life. In saying "*in room of Herod,*" it means in Herod's stead, the son having succeeded to his father. By the expression "*warned of God,*" the Greek word signifies a divine oracular intimation. As to the epithet "*He shall be called a Nazarene,*" I remit myself to what they say who understand it.

## CHAPTER III.

III. 1-3.—In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judæa, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah (xl. 3), saying, “*The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.*”

St. Matthew, purposing to write the record of Christ's preaching, places the preaching of St. John the Baptist first, for it was as an introduction to Christ's preaching; and he so places the life of St. John, because he bore witness to Christ; and he so places the baptism of St. John, because it initiated, as it were, Christ's baptism. Two things worthy of consideration present themselves in these opening words: *the first*, is the meaning of the words preached by St. John; and *the second*, St. Matthew's purpose in quoting the words of Isaiah. As to the *first*, I understand that St. John, considering the condition in which all men are as children of Adam, wherein they are impious, unbelievers, and enemies to God; whilst they know nothing of their impiety, unbelief, and enmity, and therefore do not endeavour nor desire to get out of their evil plight; and knowing that in order to get out of it they must know it; as if to rouse them he said to them, “*Repent*,” meaning, “Know what bad plight you are in, for you are impious, unbelievers, and enemies to God.” And I understand St. John, when he adds “*for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*,” to mean, “I tell you to repent,

because this is the way by which you may enter into the kingdom of heaven, which is now at hand."

Where he desires two things to be understood: *the first*, that this repentance is necessary to enter into the kingdom of heaven; for just as they, who do not know that they are sick, do not seek medicine,\* so they who do not know of their impiety, unbelief, and enmity, do not seek the medicine of the Gospel, which cures the impiety, unbelief, and enmity which is natural to us; *the second*, that by the kingdom of heaven St. John meant Christ's spiritual kingdom, which is very like to the kingdom of heaven, the divine and celestial kingdom, where God personally rules, and which was then at hand, for it commenced with the coming of the Holy Spirit. And I understand that St. John made no difference between the kingdom of God or kingdom of heaven, which is in this present life in those, who being members of Christ, have the spirit of Christ; and the kingdom of God which will be in the life eternal, because he considered that the possession is taken in this life, which is continued in the life eternal.

I likewise understand that these words of St. John were differently understood, because he did not declare what this kingdom of heaven was, nor did he state the way of entering into it, and thus he terrified some whilst he cheered others; as though there were a person to come to-day, to whom we should all give credit, and who should loudly proclaim the day of judgment to be at hand. I mean to say that just as this person would terrify false Christians, and would cheer true Christians—those who assuredly believe that the righteousness of Christ is theirs,—so St. John terrified false Jews whilst he cheered true Jews, those who were like Simeon, like Anna, and like Zachariah. So that St. John's preaching was (authoritatively) to this effect: Reflect and know the evil plight in which you are, for know assuredly that the time is now at hand in which God will personally reign here on earth, just as He

\* See Valdés' XVII. Opuscules, p. 121, a work edited and published (1851) by the same editor and publishers as is this.

personally reigns in heaven. God reigned before Christ over the whole world, but His kingdom was only recognised in Judæa, where, because God was recognised, it was said that God reigned; and where He reigned, not as He reigns since Christ, in those who are Christians, by giving to each one of them His Holy Spirit, but as it was right that He should reign over that nation outwardly by law and by ceremonies, and therefore that kingdom was not the kingdom of heaven, or the celestial kingdom, as is this which we enjoy, who, having accepted the grace of the Gospel, are incorporated into Christ and have the spirit of Christ.

As to the second thing worthy of consideration, I understand St. Matthew to call St. John, or the preaching of St. John, "*a voice crying in the wilderness;*" and I understand it according to St. Matthew to be the same to say, "*Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight;*" as that which he has stated that St. John said, "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" I mean to say that the words of St. John have the same meaning as those of Isaiah. But I understand that, according to St. Matthew, Isaiah, in saying "*the voice of one crying;*" &c., indicated the preaching of St. John, prophesying the good news that St. John should publish to the world, stating that the kingdom of heaven was at hand; where it is to be understood that we then prepare the way of the Lord, or for the Lord, as it is in Hebrew, when we reflect and take the right road, and walk in the true way that leads men to eternal life. "*To make His paths straight*" is the same as "*to prepare the way of the Lord;*" the prophets are wont to repeat the same sense in different words.

Now, that it may be understood why St. Matthew specially quoted the words of Isaiah, repeating what I have elsewhere stated, that God designs by His words and by His works to deceive human prudence, by giving it that whereon it may feed and be amused, but so that it may never attain to apprehend His divine counsel, I proceed to say that

Isaiah, having prophesied the Babylonish captivity in the thirty-ninth chapter, and beginning the fortieth chapter by saying, "*Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God,*" &c., it appears to the judgment of human prudence that Isaiah prophesied in this chapter the departure of the Jewish nation from Babylon, and their return to Jerusalem by way of the desert; where I do not deny that Isaiah did contemplate this affair of the Jewish nation, but I do say that his principal object was the bringing forth of the people of God, Christian and spiritual people, from the slavery of the law and of the kingdom of the world, and of their entrance into the grace of the Gospel, and into the kingdom of God, of which (as I have above stated) possession is taken in this life. He spoke more peculiarly with this aim than with that, so much so that even the Jews themselves, being unable to verify what Isaiah says in this chapter as to their departure from Babylon and entrance into Jerusalem, go on dreaming that Isaiah prophesied their coming forth from the captivity in which they now are, and their return to Jerusalem in the time of the Messiah.

Isaiah's words, according to the Hebrew text, are these: "*A voice that cries out in the desert, Clear away all obstructions, make a way for the Lord, make straight in the wilderness the highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised, and every mountain and hill shall be lowered, and the tortuous shall be made straight, and the rough level. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.*" Where I believe it to be certain that, by God's goodness, the happy condition of this our kingdom of heaven, wherein we take possession of the blissful state of the life eternal, was shown to Isaiah; and I understand that, seeing this present happiness continued on with that future, he began to say, "*A voice that cries,*" &c., as though triumphing in Christ's coming into the world to put God's children into possession of the kingdom of God. And I understand

that Isaiah said "*in the desert*," because that his voice not being heard, it was the same as though he had spoken in the desert, where no one could hear. It may likewise be that he understands the words "*desert*" and "*wilderness*" to be synonymous, and says that the highway and the way be cleared and levelled in the desert, in the wilderness, because in such places the highways are more out of condition; so that the expression "*in the desert*" is not associated with that which precedes, but with that which follows: "*prepare in the desert*," or, "*clear away in the desert*," &c.

And I understand that Isaiah proceeding to particularise the manner in which this was to be done, says, "*every valley shall be raised*," &c., specially putting those things which men are wont to do when they level a road; where I most simply understand Isaiah but to say that this coming of Christ is so exceedingly joyous, that we ought to put forth every demonstration of inward delight and jubilation, preparing our minds for it, as men do at the progress of some great prince through a desert, seeking that he may pass through it with perfect ease and satisfaction.

In saying, "*and shall be revealed*," &c., he means that the name of God is glorified by this coming of Christ into the world, as much by that of His humiliation as by that of His triumph.

That expression, "*and all flesh shall see it*," &c., seems suggestive of the day of judgment, in which all men generally shall see the glory of God, which will be a joy to some and a wretchedness to others: it may also be that, "*by all flesh*," he may mean all manner of persons, Jews and Gentiles, great and small, and that he refers to Christ's first coming.

In saying, "*for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it*," he means that these words which I speak are not mine but God's; He speaks them, and utters them by my mouth; nay, this mouth, at present, is not mine but His. The

glory of God was hidden prior to the coming of Christ, and at Christ's first coming it began to be discovered and revealed, in proportion as the truth of God and His omnipotence have been known by those who have known Christ; and the same glory of God shall be fully discovered and revealed at the second coming of Christ, when, as I have stated, it shall be seen and known by good and bad.

Thus do I understand the prophet's words. And reverting to those of the Evangelist, the expression, "*in those days*," is equivalent to, at that time—it is a Hebraic idiom. I think that St. John began to preach in the desert in order that his ministry should be more marvellous, should excite greater marvel in persons, and that thus they should attend the more to it.

Where he says "*repent*," the Greek word properly signifies that the man recognises his fault after having fallen into it. The expression, "*kingdom of heaven*," is the same as celestial and divine kingdom. In saying "*this is he*," he means, this St. John is he. In saying who "*cried*," he means, who shouted. As to the "*desert*," I remit myself to what I have stated in expounding the Prophet's words.

III. 4.—And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

In three things does St. Matthew here show the austere and rough life that St. John led: in his dress, that he was clad in garments made of camel's hair; in his girdle, that it was made of untanned skin; and in his food, that he ate but locusts and wild honey. Where I understand that St. John, being in the desert, used those things which were found to hand where he was, without sending, or going, into a town for them, which he did, not out of superstition, but from necessity and personal indifference. Which

indifference should be imitated by those who have Christ in their hearts, and who are concerned for God.

To him who shall desire to know for what cause St. John lived thus roughly, I will tell him of four things that now occur to me. *The first*, that the reign of ceremonies being about to terminate in St. John, the law ending in him, as we shall see further on in chapter xi. 13, it seems that it pleased God that he should, in these things, be the end of the end. *The second*, that St. John coming in the spirit and in the power of Elijah, as we shall see further on in chapter xvii., it seems that it pleased God, that he should, in his outward life, resemble Elijah, of whom we read in 2 Kings i. 8, that he wore hair, and girded himself with a girdle made of skin. *The third*, that St. John having to bear testimony to Christ, in whom there were not those external marks of sanctity, which greatly move the vulgar, it seems that it pleased God that he should live in the rough manner in which he lived, in order that his testimony should be more attractive, more appreciated, and more esteemed; and that thus the glory of the rough life that St. John led should result in the glory of Christ. *The fourth*, that St. John doing the office of the law in that he terrified men and pointed out Christ to them, it seems that God ordained that he should, in his life, present the severity, rigour, and roughness of the law; and how peculiarly does it appear to me to see the law in St. John and the gospel in Christ, and thus St. John terrifies and alarms me, whilst Christ enamours and assures me. Where I understand that it is for the Christian to give but a passing look to St. John and to the law, and to look and look again continually to Christ and to the gospel. They who shall continue to look on the law and St. John will never have peace in their consciences, they will ever find motive why to, and matter for, fear: whilst those who shall look upon Christ and the gospel will say with St. Paul, "*Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*" (Rom. v. 1).

III. 5, 6.—Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

From St. John's preaching in the desert and not in inhabited places, and from his living in the rough manner in which he lived, it came to pass that the people, moved by novelty, came forth from all parts, and went to St. John's baptism: and that they, who were baptized, said and confessed that they were baptized because they were sinners, because they had transgressed the law in many things. Where I understand that the baptism of St. John was an imitation of the baptism of Christ; and I understand that the baptism of St. John did not pacify nor assure the consciences of those who were baptized; this glory being reserved for the baptism of Christ, which it is that works these effects, not of itself, but by faith in Christ, who brings to baptism those who are baptized. I understand the effect of the baptism of St. John to have been, were it permitted to say so, the troubling of the water of the pool, whilst the effect of the baptism of Christ I understand to be the clearing of the turbid water. This confession of those who were baptized by St. John I understand to have been like the confession of those who heard the Apostles preach, which is read in Acts xix. 1-7, 18.

III. 7-10.—But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees : therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

In these words, these things present themselves as worthy of consideration. *The first*, that St. John inveighed against and spoke contumeliously of none, save the Pharisees and Sadducees, who at that time were held in the highest reputation for sanctity by the Jewish people, on account of their ceremonial ministrations, which distinguished them from other men. *The second*, that St. John, in seeing them come to his baptism, as did others, comprehended that it was the fear and terror they felt which dragged them to it, lest they should perish by the wrath of God at the day of judgment, which they had heard from St. John was at hand; understanding, too, that the kingdom of God commenced from that time. St. John, in speaking to those, whom this world calls saints, very aptly calls the day of judgment wrath to come, for to them that day will be the day of wrath: had he been speaking to God's saints, he would doubtless have called it, the day of grace and of glory. *The third*, that we, then, as men who have repented of our former lives, bring forth fruit worthy of repentance, when we cease to live as do men of the world and saints of the world; and that we live as men, who are spiritual, and as saints of God, testifying in our lives our repentance and penitence, and that we bear testimony to our Christian faith by living mortified as to the flesh and quickened as to the spirit. They who do not live thus have neither Christian faith nor Christian repentance, whatever they may say, and however they may persuade themselves that they have both one and the other; and they who do not live thus testify concerning themselves that they do not bring forth fruit worthy of repentance and of contrition. *The fourth*, that the Christian confidence, which is based upon Christian regeneration, never deceives a man, whilst the Jewish confidence, which is based upon human generation

(upon birth), ever does so: and what is more: confidence in Christian regeneration is efficient in man to make him live in holiness and righteousness all the days of his life, whilst confidence in human generation (in birth) is efficient to make him live licentiously and viciously all the days of his life. They confide in Christian regeneration, who, being regenerated and renewed by the Holy Spirit, make the righteousness of Christ their own, who say with St. Paul, "*Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?*" (Rom. viii. 33), sure, that having God and Christ on their side, there is nothing that can hurt them.

Whilst the Pharisees and Sadducees, who confided in human generation, and whom St. John rebuked, and the Jews, who, like them, had the same confidence, said, "Since we are the children of Abraham, we cannot perish," and thence lived viciously and licentiously; so false Christians, holding that they, as the children of Christian parents, must be saved, not having Christian regeneration, they also trust in human generation. *The fifth*, that St. John, when he says, "*that God is able from stones to raise up children to Abraham*," means the same as does St. Paul, in Rom. iv. 13, where he shows that God, in saving those who had Abraham's faith, saves Abraham's children, and thus fulfils what He promised Abraham; not holding them to be children of Abraham, who were begotten by Abraham's seed, but those who were regenerated by Abraham's faith.

And here it would seem that the conviction of the false Jews led them to say, "We are the seed of Abraham; to Abraham and to his seed God promised the inheritance of the world, and therefore we have nothing to fear." But this notwithstanding, they, in coming to the baptism of St. John, showed that their confidence was not sound and firm in that which, being human conviction, served but to render them vicious and licentious; and having this peril before their eyes, it made them tremble and fear. *The sixth*, that St. John, threatening the false Jews, told them

that the danger was at hand, using a Hebrew mode of speech, meaning that just at it goes hard with a bad tree, when the husbandman, being about to cut it down, brings his axe or hatchet to its trunk ; so they, too, were in a bad plight, for their ruin and perdition were near at hand : and, moreover, that just as the bad tree is cut down and cast into the fire, so the bad man is cut down and cast into the fire ; whilst the bad man is he, who has not ceased to be a man, who is neither regenerated nor renewed by the Holy Spirit.

If we would fain have that expression, “*and now also the axe,*” &c., depend upon what immediately precedes it, the meaning of these words will be, God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham, and He is now about to do so. And this meaning harmonises well with that which, in point of fact, followed, for if of the Gentiles, who were but as stones, God made children to Abraham, conformably with what St. Paul states in Rom. iv. 16, “*Therefore it is of faith,*” &c.

That expression “*generation of vipers*” is a Hebraism, tantamount to calling them infernal. In saying “*within yourselves,*” he means, that they did not utter it with their lips, but that they said it in their hearts, showing by their lives what they said in their hearts.

III. 11, 12.—I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance : but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear : he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire : Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner : but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

I understand the declaration here made by St. John in relation to his baptism to agree with what we have pre-

viously stated: that St. John's baptism troubles the water, whilst Christ's baptism clarifies it; thus St. John here says, "*I baptize you*," &c., meaning, my baptism only serves to give you knowledge of yourselves, that you may know your impiety, infidelity, and enmity to God, and that you may seek a remedy for it; but the baptism of Christ shall not be of that character, its nature being to give you the Holy Spirit, which shall operate on you as fire does upon gold, purifying you and cleansing you, mortifying you and vivifying you, yet more and more. Whence it is to be understood that they, who have been baptized, and have not got the Holy Spirit, have not been baptized with Christ's baptism, but with that of St. John.

And the token whereby a person may rest assured that he has the Holy Spirit, that he has been baptized with Christ's baptism, is peace of conscience, with mortification and vivification, for it is thus that the Holy Spirit, which they receive who are baptized with Christ's baptism, operates these peculiar effects; whilst the baptism of St. John, which is with water only, produces this effect, it gives a man self-knowledge, it disturbs him, it disquiets him. Nay, I will go further and say, that they, who, hearing the preaching of St. John, how greatly it threatens and terrifies, when they come to the baptism of St. John, they show that they know themselves to be sinners, and that they desire to be righteous; whilst they who hear the preaching of Christ, the intimation of the general indulgence and pardon through the execution of God's justice upon Christ, how greatly it assures and quiets the conscience, they, in coming to the baptism of Christ, show that they accept and take the righteousness of Christ as their own. And, therefore, baptism is not given to adults, unless they first confess the Christian faith.

When he says "*mightier than I*," he means stronger and more powerful. That expression "*whose shoes*," illustrates St. John's humility; men esteemed him highly, and he sought that their esteem should redound to the glory

of Christ, whose shoes, he says, he was unequal, or unworthy to carry in his hands.

In saying "*whose fan is in his hand*," he means that Christ's strength, that wherein He was mightier than he, consists in the faculty of judgment given him by God. And this judgment he calls a winnowing fan or shovel; whilst he calls the nations that should have been and pretended to be God's people, and Christians, the threshing floor, or heaps of unthrashed corn, ready for thrashing. He calls the righteous corn, and he calls false Christians chaff; and he calls the kingdom of God, which shall coexist with the life eternal, the garner or granary; and he calls hell-fire "*unquenchable fire*," meaning that it will burn for ever. From these words it seems that St. John's words were, in what he said of Christ, more directed to His second coming to judge, than to the first to be judged; and I am so much the more confirmed in what I said upon that passage, "*who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?*"

III. 13-17.—Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

We have no need to divine what moved Christ to come to St. John's baptism, since Christ Himself tells us it, where

He says, "*for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness*," where it appears that Christ came to St. John to be baptized to fulfil even that outward righteousness, in doing that which others did, who aimed at justification, in order that nothing apparently or outwardly pertaining to justification should be wanting in Him. I also understand that Christ and St. John fulfilled that outward righteousness to stop the mouths of men of the world, that they should have no cause for calumniating them, neither with truth nor with the semblance of truth.

What St. John says, "*I have need to be baptized of Thee*," I understand to be the expression of humility, as though he should say, "*I have greater need of Thy baptism than Thou of mine*." Such is my apprehension, for I know from Holy Scripture (Luke i. 15) that *St. John was filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb*; and I understand that had St. John needed to be baptized by Christ, Christ would have baptized him, and it is not on record that He did baptize him. Christ in saying, "*suffer it to be so now*," means: Cease to contemplate the duty which occupies thy mind, and do what I desire.

The evangelist, in saying, "*then he suffered Him*," means, then he submitted and did as Christ desired; He desired to be baptized, and thus did St. John baptize Him. Where it is said, "*He went up out of the water*," it is meant that He walked up out of the water on to the land. That expression, "*and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him*," is ambiguous; it is so in the Greek text, as to whether they were so to Christ or to St. John. But from what St. John the evangelist writes (John i. 32-34), it appears that they were so to St. John—that he saw the heavens opened, and that he saw the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove lighting upon Christ; so that it is not to be understood that the Holy Spirit descended as does a dove, but that St. John saw it in the form of a dove, whilst that expression "*upon Him*" refers to Christ. As to "*the voice from heaven*," it is to be understood that the

heavens being opened it appeared that the voice came forth from them. That Christ too saw the heavens opened, that He saw the Spirit of God, and that He heard the Father's voice, I have no doubt whatever; but I do doubt whether those, who were present, saw what Christ and St. John saw, whether they heard what Christ and St. John heard; and I should much more readily believe that they heard the voice, but that they did not see the vision; because I understand from Holy Scripture that man is more capable of hearing than of seeing—of hearing the voice of God, than of seeing the secrets of God.

These three mysteries that concurred in the baptism of Christ are truly very great, but the baptism of Christ is not less than they, so that the baptism was worthy of them and they of the baptism. The reason why Christ was baptized is already seen in the words of Christ Himself. The reason why God showed these three signs at Christ's baptism—that of the opening of the heavens, that of the descent of the Holy Spirit, and that of the voice—I shall leave to the consideration of those who are spiritually minded. I will indeed state this, that I do not understand it to have been to assure St. John of the Messiah's person, since he had already known Him from his mother's womb, but that St. John might, when bearing witness to Christ, be able to say: This is the Messiah, the Son of God, and I know it for certain, for I have seen such and such signs; and thus his testimony would be the more believed.

As to that which (God) here states, "*in whom I am well pleased*," *ευδοκησα*, this word in the Greek is employed in Holy Scripture when it signifies that benevolence wherein God delights, is well pleased, and which to Him is satisfactory, as is that wherein He knows us, predestinates us, calls us, sanctifies us, and glorifies us. And on this subject there is a response which I have written to question No. 27. What the Father's voice said harmonises well with what Isaiah said (chap. liii. 10), where

he states, speaking of Christ, "*and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand,*" where the Hebrew word for "pleasure" is synonymous with the Greek word here used, "*in whom I am well pleased.*" I state all this in order that all that is signified by that expression, "*in whom I am well pleased,*" may be understood. I could wish to be able similarly to cause it to be understood in what manner Christ is the Son of God, as I am able to cause it to be understood how Christ is beloved of God, but as I do not understand it, I should ill succeed in making others do so; nay, I feel assured that even had I understood it, it would have been impossible to make others do so, so alien is it to human capacity to comprehend the divine generation of the only begotten Son of God, upon which subject I recollect having written a Consideration (xcv.), to my mind fully to the purpose.

## CHAPTER IV.

IV. 1-4.—Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he afterwards hungered. And the tempter came to him and said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

*The Holy Spirit, in leading Christ apart into the desert immediately after His baptism, in order that He should there combat with the devil, and that He should there conquer him, before that He commenced His ministry, teaches ministers of the Gospel that they should seek isolation in retirement before they engage in preaching it; waiting for the conscious inward teaching of the Holy Spirit, how both to combat the devil and to conquer him; in order that it may not come to pass that preaching without inspired teaching they lose time; and that being tempted and conquered in society, after that they have commenced their ministry, they cause the Gospel to be reviled. God's design, in willing that Christ should be tempted, I understand to have been that the devil should remain vanquished, and therefore terrified and cowed. The devil had been victorious, and hence spirited and valiant against men from the time when, combating the first man, he conquered him, and subjected him to death and to other miseries; but Jesus Christ our Lord, the second Adam,*

coming to repair the evil, which had been brought upon the world by the victory the devil had gained over the first Adam, it was necessary that the first thing done by Christ should be to conquer the devil; and forasmuch as He could not conquer him unless He were assaulted by him, God ordained that he should tempt Him, in order that, the devil remaining vanquished, the human race should begin to feel the benefit of Christ, the devil beginning to show cowardice from his having been conquered.

The number of days that Christ was in the desert, before He came to preach the Gospel, being one and the same with the number of days that Moses was on the mount in converse with God, before he came down to give the law to the Hebrew nation, leads me to think that there is some correspondence in these respective periods, and that just as Moses was forty days and forty nights on the mount, before that he came to publish the law, so God willed that Christ should be forty days and forty nights in the wilderness, before He came to publish the Gospel. Whence I understand that he who shall in all Christ's works occasionally look to Adam, and at other times to Moses, will attain to the right knowledge of much of the divine counsel there is in them. I do not think that the devil's design in tempting Christ was to attain assurance as to whether He was or was not the Son of God, since it appears, from what we shall see further on, that he was sure of this; but I understand it to have been the same, which he had in tempting the first man; I mean to say that just as the devil persuaded the first man that he should not believe in God's voice which had said, "*If thou eat of it, thou shalt die,*" so he designed to persuade Christ that He should not believe in the voice of God which had said, "*This is My Son;*" or, at the least, that he should so manage Christ, as that in obeying him, Christ should deviate from obedience to God.

God had directed Christ how He should regulate Himself in the work of the restoration of the human race; and,

it being necessary that He should not deviate from that divine direction, the devil solicited Him to deviate, by perverting the divine counsel of God; in relation to which I recollect having written in an Epistle (23) what I feel, to which I remit myself, as also to what I have written in my exposition of 1 Cor. i. Now reverting to the words of the text, it is to be understood that in saying, "*by the Spirit*," he means by the Holy Spirit; and that Christ's being hungry was a motive to temptation; and that he, whom the evangelist calls devil he also calls tempter, meaning that it is the devil's office to tempt men, soliciting them to deviate from obedience to God. And I likewise remember to have written an Epistle (30) in which I have stated what I understand in relation to temptation.

That the devil should say to Christ, "*If thou be the Son of God*," I understand, as I have said, that he took occasion to do so from that voice of the Father which had said, "*This is My Son*;" as though the devil should have said to Christ, "Wouldst thou see, whether what that voice said, that 'Thou art the Son of God,' is true? Since Thou art hungry, convert these stones into loaves." Oh, how many, many times are they, who are brought by Christ to be children of God, tempted in the same manner and by the same words as Christ was tempted! Nay, I am brought to understand the devil's design in this affair by my own experience; and I am sure that all, who, having believed in the preached Gospel, shall hold themselves to be children of God, will understand it too.

From the fact that the devil caught Christ hungered he boldly presumed to tempt Him, seeking to ensnare Him by hunger; and so he said to Him, "*Speak that these stones be converted into loaves*"—where "*speak*" is the same as "*command*" or "*make*"—"for, since Thou art the Son of God, it will be easy to Thee, and Thou wilt thus remedy Thy needs." The words with which Christ most modestly repels the temptation of the devil are written in Deuteronomy viii., where Moses tells the Hebrew nation that

the reason why God had dragged them through the desert, and had exposed them to suffer hunger, was in order that He might maintain them in an extraordinary manner; and thus to show them that bread is not the only thing that sustains and maintains man; for it is a fact that he will be sustained and maintained with whatever else it shall please God to give the virtue, the power, to maintain and to sustain that He gives to bread; where it is to be understood that by bread Holy Scripture means everything that has the power to maintain and sustain man, being naturally and in the ordinary way the product of the earth.

The motive that Moses had when he spoke those words to the Hebrew nation being understood, it is to be understood that Christ, when He quoted them to the devil, meant to say to him, "Although I hunger, I have no need to take counsel from thee, converting stones into loaves, since it is clear from Holy Scripture that God is wont to maintain and sustain men with whatever He pleases and wills so to do, giving it the virtue and power that He gives to bread; so that there is no reason why I should make stones loaves, since it is a fact that, were such the will of God, stones would have the same effect upon me as loaves."

And hereupon Christians ought, when they shall find themselves in want of those things wherewith our bodily frame is sustained, to consider that God is mighty, nay, that God has practically sustained and maintained men without these things which ordinarily sustain and maintain them; so that when the devil shall persuade them to deviate from Christian duty, from Christian decorum, in order to provide for their bodily necessities, let them then say with Christ, "*Man does not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God,*" where by "word" is meant "thing," according to Hebrew idiom, which avails itself of one word both to express "word" and to express "thing," as is seen in many places of Holy Scripture. In saying, "*that proceedeth out of the mouth*

*of God*,” He alludes to what He has said, and means that just as a man, were he omnipotent, and that by a single word that should proceed from his lips he should accomplish whatever he wished, in giving things the virtue and power he might wish; so God, who is superlatively omnipotent, by His mere will does all that He wills, causing things to have that power and efficacy which it pleases Him that they should have.\*

IV. 5-7.—Then the devil taketh him into the holy city, and setteth him on the pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him again, It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

As I do not understand in what form or manner the devil presented himself to Christ in the first temptation, to persuade him to make loaves out of stones, so neither do I understand, in this second, in what form or manner he bore Christ away to Jerusalem, which is called the holy city, and there placed Him upon the roof of an aisle of the temple, or upon the pinnacle of its spire, meaning the highest and most perilous position. I well understand that the devil had the same design in this temptation as in the first; in the one he thought to ensnare Christ by hunger, and in the other he desired to ensnare Him by seeming piety, and so he said to Him, Wouldst Thou see whether the voice which Thou heardst was true or not? cast Thyself down from hence, for if Thou be the Son of God, Thou wilt not hurt Thyself, for God promises in Holy

\* There is a consideration in St. Mark upon the condition of Christ in the desert.

Scripture to take such care of them that are His, that He will ever have angels to watch over them, that nothing may hurt them, so that Thou, being the Son of God, hast nothing to fear. To this, the devil's argument, Christ replied from the self-same Holy Scripture, saying: It is not right that I should do what thou tellst me, for it would be to tempt God, a thing forbidden by God Himself. Where the modesty with which Christ responds to the devil, repelling his arguments by words from Holy Scripture, should be observed; and I understand that the devil having been repelled in the first temptation by the authority of Holy Scripture, thought of conquering in this second by the authority of the same Scripture; and thus he quoted to Christ, and as it appears to me much to the purpose, though Christ repelled it very much more to the purpose, with that passage: "*Thou shalt not tempt*," or, *tempt thou not*, "*the Lord thy God*." Where, I understand that we men tempt God then, when we rashly depend upon God in things, to which God is not pledged to us by promise; and when, in things wherein we have His promise, we expose ourselves to danger without any occasion; in order to try what hold we have on God; and when we ask God for those things of which we do stand in need, as though we doubted the omnipotence of God, or, the truth of God; and I understand that it was in this manner that the Hebrew nation tempted God in the desert; and upon these promises of God I have written "*a reply*." Here, again, I understand that the impiety of those is no less, who avail themselves of these words, "*Thou shalt not tempt*," &c., in order to hide their distrust in the promises of God, in what concerns the sustenance of the body, without anxiety and care on our part; and in what concerns the justification of our spirits through divine justice having been executed upon Christ; than the *temerity* of those, who, overlooking these words, expose themselves without occasion to perils, saying, "*God will help me*." Would to God that they who fall into the former impiety,

did not exceed in number that of those who fall into this *temerity*. I speak thus, for the number of those who fall into that impiety is as much greater than the number of those who fall through *temerity*, as is the number of false Christians greater than that of true Christians. Where I understand that true Christians are tempted to fall into *temerity* as Christ was tempted, but they are kept from falling into it as Christ was kept; whilst false Christians are tempted to fall into that impiety, and they do fall, and they are prostrated by the temptation, nay, they perish in it. True Christians are indeed tempted by the impiety, but false Christians are seldom tempted by *temerity*; and when they are tempted, they fall by the temptation, which has been witnessed by many.

By “*taketh*,” we are to understand carry or bear away. Where it is said “*concerning thee*,” be it understood what affects thee. As to the rest I remit myself to what I have stated in my exposition of Psalm xci. That future, “*shalt not tempt*,” is to be understood as the imperative “*tempt thou not*,” for it is so in Hebrew.

IV. 8-11.—Again the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

Nor do I here understand in what manner the devil showed Christ what the Evangelist here states, neither does it much affect that which it is of importance here

to understand ; which is this, that the devil, seeing that he had not been able to ensnare Christ, either by hunger, or by seeming piety, now thought of ensnaring Him by vain-glorious worldliness ; not indeed as Son of God, but as son of Adam, as a man of the world ; and thus he does not say to Him, as on former occasions, “ *If thou art the Son of God,*” for what he desired in relation to Him was nothing affecting the Son of God, as was the converting of stones into loaves, or the casting Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, without suffering injury.

Where I note, that although the devil failed to persuade Christ to do any one of his behests, seeing that Christ excused Himself, not as Son of God, but as mere man, the esteem in which he previously held Him was on the wane ; as appears from this, that in the *first* place, he tempted Him with that which was seemingly modest : Thou art hungry ; Thou art in the desert ; if Thou art the Son of God, make these stones loaves, and eat : in the *second*, he tempted Him to do that which was rash, telling Him to cast Himself down from the spire of the temple : whilst in the *third*, he tempted Him with impiety, saying, “ *All this will I give Thee,*” &c.

Taking this into consideration, I do not hold it to be misapprehension upon the part of those, who state that it was the devil’s aim to assure himself whether Christ were the Son of God. True it is, but, in my opinion, they would have spoken more to the purpose had they [said that he aimed at certainty as to what Christ’s sonship was, whether He was the Son of God after the manner in which Holy Scripture is wont to call certain classes of men, or whether, after some novel manner ; although I have yet to attain to the mere knowledge by which this is admitted ; nay, they both are compatible ; that the devil purposed to do that with Christ which he did with Adam, and to attain certainty as to what sort of sonship Christ’s was.

And herein consists Christ’s victory, that the devil did

not succeed in either one or the other. Reverting to the temptation, I say that, in this third temptation, it is to be understood that the devil promised Christ that which he could not give Him; and that, forasmuch as the condition which he proposed, saying, "*If Thou wilt fall down and worship me,*" was God-dishonouring, Christ, as zealous of God's honour, did not answer him with the gentleness with which He answered him on the two other occasions, but somewhat angrily, saying to him, "*Get thee hence, Satan!*" I understand: malignant and infernal spirit, leave my presence! for it is to me intolerable that thou shouldest propose anything to me that is opposed to the honour of God.

Whence Christians will understand they should, on no account, tolerate that any one propound aught to them that prejudices the glory of God; that they have to maintain Christian meekness when things shall be propounded to them that prejudice their own glory; but that they have to exhibit subdued anger when things shall be propounded to them that prejudice the glory of God. Which is prejudiced when that is attributed to the creature which should be attributed to God only, and when it is pretended to have that through the creature which is to be obtained from God only, such as piety, righteousness, and holiness, which are obtained of God through Christ.

I have said with subdued anger, considering that, though Christ drove away Satan from His presence with some anger, He did not deviate from His accustomed modesty, defending Himself with that Scripture that states, "*Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God,*" &c., as though Christ had said: I tell thee, Satan, that thou leave me forthwith; for thou suggestest to me that I should do that, which is directly contrary to the law of God, to the will of God. Thou wouldest have me worship thee, whilst it is God's will that they, who are His, worship and serve Him only.

Whence let Christians learn how they must defend

themselves against the persecutions of the devil, I mean to say that, just as Christ, being under the law, defended Himself quoting the text of the law; so they, who are under grace, will defend themselves by pleading Gospel obligation, Christian propriety; so that, when assaulted by the devil, by their own flesh, or by men of the world, with anything opposed to Christian obligation and to Christian propriety, they may immediately say: "*No, for that is not what Christ would do.*" As I have stated more fully in a consideration. [No. xc.]

And upon this subject I understand that, under this Gospel dispensation, the promptings of the devil are much more effectively resisted by this shield, "*No, for this is not what Christ would do,*" than by the shield formed by the dictates of the law, under the dispensation of the law; I mean that temptation leaves much more rapidly when it hears say, "*No, for this is not what Christ would have done,*" than it left upon hearing the dictates of the law. And reflecting that Christ, when He defended Himself, pleaded the text of the law against the devil, though He did not, indeed, refrain from worshipping the devil, because the law commanded that God only should be worshipped—He refrained from doing so, because it was repugnant to Him—I consider how ineffably great was Christ's humility, in that He lived not only subject to the law, but He manifested that He would do nothing that the law prohibited, because the law prohibited it, wholly and entirely keeping His most exalted divinity out of sight.

Whence Christians will learn that they ought to humble themselves, keeping their spiritual dignity out of sight, when it shall be necessary to keep it out of sight; presenting themselves to other men as their equals; evincing the same interest in things that others do, though moved by a perfectly different impulse; so that just as saints of the world purpose to publish their perfections, so should these seek to hide their perfections; which very greatly humbles and prostrates human presumption and ambition, which

in Christians, ought to be humbled and prostrated to the utmost.

Upon that expression "*then the devil leaveth Him*," &c., it is matter of observation that the experience of Christians is ever the same with that of Christ, for that just as when Christ proved victorious over the devil, the devil departed from Him and ceased to molest Him, and that angels came to minister unto Him, so likewise when they prove victorious over their temptations, the temptations depart from them, and leave them, and the angels, divine inspirations, divine pleasures and inward sensations, come to minister unto them. Of this, I say, I am certain that Christians have experienced, some more and some less, according as they shall have more or less fought and conquered.

In the Greek, the word "*thou shalt worship*," is almost the same as thou shalt serve; because the service wherewith God wills to be served by His people is worship. Under the law, it pleased God to accept Jewish worship, which consisted in external acts of obedience symbolising inward ones; whilst under the Gospel, God accepts Christian worship, which consists of inward acts of obedience rendered in spirit and in truth; and just as the Jew did not perform his duty with inward worship, unless he had the outward; so the Christian does not perform his duty with outward worship, unless he have the inward, which is peculiar and natural to him. The Hebrew text literally says, "*Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God and shalt serve Him*," whence it seems that to fear, in Hebrew, is the same as to worship, to dread, and to reverence.

The evil spirit is called in Hebrew, Satan, which signifies hinderer or obstructor, because he is ever engaged in impeding and obstructing the works of God, perverting the counsels of God. He is called in Greek, *διαβόλος*, which signifies accuser, or slanderer, for it is specially his office to accuse and to slander men. Note here, that the Evangelist, reporting Christ's words, says, "*Satan*," whilst

Speaking himself, he says, devil, a word he would never have used had he written in Hebrew, for it is unknown in Hebrew; but if this Scripture had been translated from the Hebrew, the translator might, it seems, have written devil or Satan interchangeably; a matter, however, of little import.

IV. 12-16.—Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet (ix. 1), saying, “*The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.*”

St. Matthew narrates that after Christ came forth triumphant over fasting and the devil, He, hearing that Herod had incarcerated St. John because he rebuked him, in order that Herod should not do as much to Him, the time appointed by the Divine Majesty not having yet arrived, went back into Galilee, and would not go to Nazareth, where He had been reared, but to Capernaum, of which he speaks as a city on the strand of the lake, in the confines of Zabulon and Nephthalim. And he states that Christ did this, in order that what Isaiah says—“*the land of Zabulon,*” &c.—might be fulfilled, where St. Matthew understands that Isaiah in these words prophesied that the light of Christ’s ministry should illuminate those parts. In that passage, “*in order that that might be fulfilled,*” &c., it may be remarked that the

Evangelists use this mode of speaking, wishing it to be understood that because *this* had to come to pass, the prophet said *that*.

“*Beyond Jordan*” is equivalent to saying “on the other side of the river Jordan.” By that expression, “*which sat in darkness*,” we are to understand all them, who, being without God and without Christ, live secure in their blindness. That “*shadow of death*” is a Hebraism; they thus call places, which, from their obscurity and gloom, seem to menace death to those who traverse them. As to the comparison of the words of the Evangelist with those of the prophet, I remit myself to those, who know more.

IV. 17.—From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

St. Matthew exhibits Christ beginning to preach in Capernaum, and that He began with the same words with which St. John began, to the confusion of the preachers of our day, who occupy themselves in seeking novelties to put into their sermons, not to repeat what others have said, for they are ashamed to say a good thing twice; unlike St. Paul, who, keeping his mind’s eye upon that which should profit those to whom he wrote, did not feel aggrieved to repeat the same thing to them over and over again. It is very true that, according to St. Mark, it appears that the words with which Christ preached, and those with which St. John preached, were not all the same, for he states that Christ said: “*The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Repent and believe the gospel.*” Where I understand that the preaching of St. John and that of Christ, and of Christ’s disciples, whilst He lived, consisted solely in intimating to men the speedy coming of the spiritual kingdom, which commences in this present life in those, who accept the

Gospel, and goes on continued in the life eternal, never discovering to them the secret of the door, by which entrance into this kingdom is opened, which is by acceptance of the righteousness of Christ; for as yet Christ had not wrought the reconciliation of man with God, which He wrought by dying upon the cross: which secret I understand the Apostles to have discovered, after that they by the Holy Spirit understood it; and therein the Gospel consists.

IV. 18-22.—And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

There are here three things, as it seems to me, worthy of consideration. *The first*, that the office of an apostle, of a preacher of the Gospel, is to fish for men, to drag them out of the obscurity, the darkness, and the confusion of the kingdom of the world, and to bring them forth into the light, the brightness, and the peace of the kingdom of God; and the net with which these men are caught is the word of the Gospel, the intimation of general indulgence and pardon by the justice of God executed upon Christ; and it is thus that they, who accept this indulgence, come forth from the obscurity, the darkness, and confusion of the kingdom of the world, and enter into the light, the brightness, and the peace of the kingdom of God. I mean

when the acceptance is the work of God Himself, for when it is human effort this effect is not felt.

*The second*, that these four apostles, when they heard Christ's voice, followed Christ, without consulting human prudence, nor waiting for other inducements than that, "*I will make you fishers of men*," which at the time they did not understand; doing as I feel sure all will do, who inwardly hear Christ's voice; they, who ere they accept the Gospel, and thus come forth from the kingdom of the world, and enter into the kingdom of God, deliberate and go about consulting with human prudence, witness concerning themselves that they do not hear the voice of Christ, for had they heard it, they would have done what the Apostles did.

*The third*, that if the sons of Zebedee had looked to the obligation of human generation (birth), they would not have left their father to follow Christ. Where it is to be understood that the man, who is called of God to be a disciple of Christ, to imitate Christ, ought to renounce the obligation of human generation (of birth), only regarding the obligation of Christian regeneration; what I feel in relation to this I have stated more fully in two replies to two questions.\* Where it has to be observed that man has then to renounce the obligation of human generation (of birth) to follow Christian regeneration, when the obligation of human generation (or birth) shall impede or disturb him in fixing his mind wholly upon the obligation of Christian regeneration; which consists in preaching the Gospel, in teaching Christian life, and in imitating the humility, the meekness, the obedience to God, and love to his neighbours, which Jesus Christ our Lord exhibited here upon earth.

IV. 23-25.—And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of

\* Question 21; question 22.

sickness, and all manner of disease, among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and Decapolis, and Jerusalem, and Judæa, and from beyond Jordan.

When he says that Jesus went about all Galilee, he means, that He went through all parts of that province, and when he says "*in their synagogues*," he means in the public halls, where the Jews assembled, not to worship, for the temple at Jerusalem had been appointed for this purpose unto them, nor were they permitted to worship anywhere else; nor to pray, for they prayed anywhere, but to teach and to be taught only in and about things involved in the law: and these halls where they congregated, the Evangelist calls *synagogues*, a word which is synonymous with what we now call churches. I recollect having discussed this Jewish custom in an epistle. [No. xix.]

St. Matthew states that Christ did three things. He taught, He preached the gospel of the kingdom, and He healed the sick. I think that His teaching consisted in expounding the law, showing its right apprehension, and I understand that from teaching He took occasion to preach the gospel of the kingdom, and I understand that it was thus called the preaching of Christ, because the coming of the kingdom of God was intimated by it, saying: "*Mind, the kingdom of God is at hand.*" And I understand that this intimation was called the Gospel, for it is a most blessed thing that God is pleased and satisfied to rule and govern men without law and without precepts, but with His Holy Spirit, as they in effect feel, who, accepting the righteous-

ness of Christ, are in the kingdom of God, which in Christ's day was preached as about to come, and which came when the Holy Spirit was given ; which however remains unseen and unknown, save by those who belong to it and are in it, and even they feel it more readily than they see it.

And I understand that, in order to awaken, to unveil, and to open the eyes of men, that they should believe this good news, Christ wrought miracles, healing divers and strange diseases, of which St. Matthew enumerates some, and suppresses others; and I understand that the multitudes, of whom St. Matthew speaks as following after Christ, coming from the countries here named, did so on account of the miracles. In fact, we men are moved much by these outward things, that bring in their train marvel and bodily utility ; whilst we are moved but very little by those which bring edification and spiritual utility. That expression "*tormented with pangs and agonies,*" I understand to be the exposition of what he spoke as divers infirmities. The paralytic are the same as the palsied, they who have the palsy.

## CHAPTER V.

V. 1-12.—And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain ; and when he had sat down, his disciples came unto him : And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn : for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek : for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness : for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful : for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart : for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers : for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad ; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

St. Matthew having set down the words in which Christ preached the gospel of the kingdom of heaven, the celestial and divine one, and having chronicled some of the many miracles which He wrought for the confirmation of His preaching, proceeds to record a long discourse, a thoroughly

Christian and most divine one, which He made to His disciples, in which it appears that He aimed at teaching them these seven things. *The first*, that the kingdom of heaven which He preached was not in this present life either outward or corporeal, but inward and spiritual, although in the life eternal, after the resurrection of the just, it will be external and internal, outward and inward, corporeal and spiritual, being bliss perfect, complete, and full to the brim. *The second*, that the dignity of His disciples is most exalted and most divine, forasmuch as they are the light of the world, the sun of the earth. *The third*, that whilst He lived bodily with them, He willed that the law should be respected, and kept in all and every point. *The fourth*, that they, who enter into the kingdom of heaven by acceptance of the Gospel, have to come to a fixed resolution with the world and with themselves, resolving to live according to the obligation of Christian regeneration: and in laying down the difference between the obligation of human generation (birth), and that of Christian regeneration, He defines the proper idea of Christian perfection, and counsels how to attain it. *The fifth*, that they, who pertain to the kingdom of heaven, have to shun every manifestation of external sanctity, not desiring that the world should hold them to be saints. *The sixth*, that they, who are in the kingdom of heaven, ought to be free from all personal solicitude, confiding in the care that God takes of them. *The seventh*, that it pertains to those, who are in the kingdom of heaven, to live amongst men exercising great circumspection, and it behoves them to aim at the confirmation of their Christian faith by experience in Christian life.

Such appears to have been Christ's purpose in this argument, and the Christian who shall keep it in his mind's eye, recognising himself to be a disciple of Christ, will find great edification, for he will learn how he must live to maintain Christian decorum, and to discharge the obligation of Christian regeneration; whilst he that shall

not recognise himself to be a disciple of Christ, nor find himself within the kingdom of heaven, will understand that he, to enter into it, must renounce his own righteousness, have no confidence in himself, and embrace the righteousness of Christ, relying upon Christ, assured that this cannot fail him.

Christ proceeding, then, to specify the qualifications that concur in them, who are the children of the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom being His own, places first, *poverty of spirit*; He means of the mind, which He holds to be the opposite of magnanimity; for that magnanimity is self-dependent, and would hold it to be dishonouring to depend upon God; whilst the poor in spirit depends upon God, and would not have the courage to depend upon himself: *it might be said that the kingdom of the world belongs to the magnanimous, whilst the kingdom of heaven belongs to the poor in spirit.* The world holds the magnanimous to be fortunate and the poor in spirit to be unfortunate; whilst God holds the magnanimous to be unfortunate and the poor in spirit to be fortunate; not on account of the poverty itself, but on account of that which results from it; for he, distrusting himself and all creatures, though he be very rich, expects neither salvation nor bodily sustenance from his riches, but from God; though he be a grandee, he does not pretend that his vassals and servants should defend him from the dangers of this present life, pretending to have this only from God; and though he live righteously and holily, he does not pretend to justify himself before God with his own righteousness, cleaving to the righteousness of Christ; whence it results, that living thus, distrusting himself and all creatures, and confiding in God alone, God takes care of him; and God ruling him and governing him with His Holy Spirit, that which Christ here says comes to pass, the kingdom of heaven is his.

Christ places as *second* qualification of those who are in the kingdom of heaven, *mourning*; He means to say, that the man is discontented with himself, on account of his

defects and weaknesses, combined with suffering the bodily wants to which our flesh is subject, whilst it is possible and mortal. The world holds them to be unhappy who mourn, holding them to be happy who laugh; who enjoy the vain and miserable pleasures of this present life, living in prosperity and glee; whilst God holds them, who laugh, to be unhappy; holding them to be happy, who mourn; not because they mourn; but, because mourning for that, which they do mourn, they commend themselves to God; and God comforts them in their minds, making them look to Christ, in whom they are righteous, although they are unrighteous in themselves, and in their bodies; setting before them the happiness which they will enjoy in the life eternal.

Christ places as *third* qualification of those who are in the kingdom of heaven, *meekness*, which consists in a man living in the present life like a sheep among wolves; and, in particular, just as Christ lived, conformably with Isaiah's prediction concerning Him, as we shall see in Chapter XII. The world holds them to be unhappy, who live practising this meekness, judging them to be mean and despicable; holding the valiant to be happy, who make themselves feared by others; whilst God holds the valiant of this world to be unhappy, holding His weak ones to be happy: not on account of the weakness in itself; but because having learned it of Christ, and having received it by incorporation into Christ, their experience will be like Christ's; for just as Christ is heir of the kingdom of heaven, or of the inheritance of the world, promised to Abraham and to his seed, so shall they be heirs of the same inheritance and of the same kingdom.

Christ places as *fourth* qualification of those who are in the kingdom of heaven, *hunger and thirst after righteousness*; He means that they vex and afflict themselves, being anxious to comprehend the righteousness and perfection in which they know themselves to be comprehended by incorporation into Christ; to be as righteous and perfect

in themselves as they are righteous and perfect in Christ. The world holds them to be unhappy, who follow after this righteousness and after this perfection; holding them to be happy, who, by external acts of sanctity, persuade themselves they are holy and righteous; whilst God holds them to be unhappy, who thus persuade themselves; holding them to be happy, who live with that hunger and with that thirst; not on account of the hunger and thirst in itself; but of that which results from it; for they, commanding themselves to God, God increases the faith and the spirit in them, wherewith they are mortified and quickened; so that they succeed in quelling their hunger and their thirst, attaining much of that righteousness and perfection which they sought and longed for.

Christ places as *fifth* qualification of those who are in the kingdom of heaven *mercy and pity*; that a man compassionate those whom he sees in want, and that he help them; not for his own glory, nor for his own interest or merit, but for the glory of God; because the mercy that is not of this kind, is not Christian mercy, and Christ speaks here, but of that, which is Christian.

The world, indeed, prizes the merciful, holding them to be happy, deeming that they aim at promoting their own glory and their own interest; and it holds them to be unhappy, who hide their acts of mercy; whilst God holds them to be unhappy, who publish their acts of mercy, as we shall see in Chapter VI.; and holds them to be happy, who hide their acts of mercy; not for their mercy's sake; but because the mercy which they obtain from God results from it, bringing spiritual gifts and bodily benefits, His favours, associated with it.

Christ places as the *sixth* qualification of those, who are in the kingdom of heaven *purity of heart*, which only falls to the portion of those, who accept the grace of the gospel; who attain this purity by faith, agreeably with what St. Peter says, in Acts xv. 9, "*purifying their hearts by faith*;" whence it is to be understood that the hearts of

all men of the world are filthy; for that as children of Adam they are ungodly, unbelieving, and enemies of God, having this ungodliness, infidelity, and enmity in the heart, which is purified and cleansed by Christian faith, through the acceptance of remission of sins, and of reconciliation with God through Christ. *And it is something truly marvellous and divine, that man, as soon as he accepts from the heart the righteousness of Christ, loses ungodliness, infidelity, and enmity to God, and begins to believe in God, to confide in God, and to love God, and thus to know and see God, in which his happiness consists.* As to this knowledge of God and this vision of God, I remit myself to what I have said upon 1 Cor. xiii.; and in [the] two considerations [51 and 85 of the printed collection]. The world thinks nothing of purity of heart, and, therefore, holds them only to be happy who exhibit external purity in their manners, whilst God holds them to be unhappy, as we shall see in Chapter XXIII.; God holds them to be happy who are pure in heart, for they become capable of knowing and seeing God in the present life, as far as man may, and in the life eternal, as he ought.

Christ places as *seventh* qualification of those, who are in the kingdom of heaven, *the making of peace, the being peacemakers*, but in the manner in which Christ Himself was so, who, by dying on the cross, has reconciled men to God, reconciling them also amongst themselves, who enter upon this reconciliation, who, although they are disquieted by the world with persecutions and by martyrdoms, enjoy peace with God, and thus have peace in their consciences, and are at peace with all, neither disquieting themselves, nor making war upon any one. They are then peaceful, peacemakers, or pacifiers, who intimate to men the peace which Christ made between God and them, and who bring them to enjoy this peace.

The world disregards this peace, and, therefore, labours to make them unhappy, who have thus been peacemakers, by persecuting them, and by putting them to death; whilst

God disregards those whom the world holds to be peacemakers, whom He holds to be unhappy, because they do not know true peace ; holding them to be happy, who, knowing the true peace, strive to bring men to it. And their happiness consists in that, doing the same office that the Son of God wrought, they also are the children of God, and they are held to be such, and are so called by God.

Christ places as the *eighth* qualification of those who are in the kingdom of heaven, the endurance of *persecution for righteousness' sake* ; He means that which is peculiar to the kingdom of heaven, for accepting, or for preaching, of which righteousness, persecution is annexed ; for men cannot endure that there should be another righteousness than that which they understand and attain by their human prudence. Whence it comes to pass that the world holds those, who are persecuted for this righteousness, to be unhappy, holding their persecutors to be happy ; because, as Christ says, they persuade themselves that they render God service ; whilst God holds persecutors to be unhappy, and the persecuted to be happy ; not for the persecution in itself, but because the glory of God is illustrated by it ; so that by it they are preserved and maintained in possession of the kingdom of God, in the same manner as are they, who are the poor in spirit ; and thus Christ affirms equally of them both, "*for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*" Where I hold it to be certain that only they, who feel the poverty of spirit, and are persecuted for Christian righteousness, feel the rule and government of God, in which the kingdom of heaven consists.

That which God adds, saying, "*Blessed are ye,*" &c., pertains to the amplification of this eighth qualification ; where those words, "*falsely*," and "*for my sake*," merit great consideration, in order that it may be understood that this happiness does not attach simply to those, who are falsely reviled, but to those who are reviled falsely, for Christ's sake ; because they preach Him, because they teach how

to live like Christians, or because they live Christianly imitating Christ.

That expression, “*rejoice and be exceeding glad*,” &c., the apostles fulfilled to the letter, as appears by St. Luke, in Acts v.; whilst all they, who have been and are true Christians, have consecutively fulfilled, and do, one after the other, fulfil it, considering that the glory of God and of Christ is illustrated by their suffering; and that thus their glory is increased in the kingdom of heaven which is in this present life, and that it will be increased in that, which will be in the life eternal.

And here God’s liberality should be considered, who gives us the constancy and firmness to suffer for Christ, and afterwards rewards the firmness and constancy, which He gives us, with increase of glory. Christ, in saying, “*for so likewise persecuted*,” &c., comforts us with the example of the prophets, whose disciples we are, who the better endure persecutions, by considering that the prophets have passed through them; and still better, by considering that Christ Himself has passed through them; and that all they, who have preached Him, have ever passed through them, as have all they who have sought to imitate Him.

From these eight qualifications, which Christ has stated, concur in those, who are in the kingdom of heaven, the disciples might well have understood that the kingdom of heaven, in the present life, is not corporeal but spiritual; but they were so alienated from the thought, that they never understood it, until they received the Holy Spirit; which showed them by experience, that which they never could have comprehended by knowledge; although Christ had clearly told them of these eight qualifications, which are so combined together with that which results from them, that they are all, in every one of those, who enter into the kingdom of heaven, through acceptance of the righteousness of Christ.

For it is a fact that this acceptance gives them poverty of spirit; this makes them mourn and grieve over their

defects and their weaknesses; this gives them true meekness; this implants in them hunger and thirst after righteousness, to be more righteous in themselves; this makes them merciful; this gives them purity of heart; this makes them peacemakers, after the fashion in which Christ was a peacemaker; and for this they are persecuted, reviled, and maltreated by the world; whence it results that they are in the kingdom of heaven, they are called children of God, and they are so; they know and they see God; that God is merciful to them; that they comprehend much of the righteousness and perfection in which they are comprehended; that they are heirs of the world, which was promised to Abraham and to his seed; and that they are consoled by God in all their difficulties and in all their labours.

Here it behoves every Christian to consider, that since it is a fact that they, who in the present life, whilst this flesh is passible and mortal, accept the grace of the Gospel, enjoy all these privileges; what must those be which they will enjoy in the life eternal? the more so, when this our flesh shall be impassible and immortal.

V. 13-16.—Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on the stand; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Christ having shown that the happiness of the kingdom of heaven in the present life is wholly inward and spiritual

proceeds to show the greatness of the dignity of those, who are His disciples, more especially of those, who go on to imitate Him in everything that is imitable. He makes this dignity to consist in two things: the one, that they are the salt of the earth; and the other, that they are the light of the world. Where I understand that it pertains to the disciples of Christ to be the salt of the earth, in two ways: *the one*, in that just as the salt imparts its savour to the viands, which, without it, would be unpalatable to us; so the disciples of Christ impart relish to the world; it is for their sake that God is pleased to preserve it and to uphold it; and *the other*, in that just as the viands are preserved by the salt from corruption, so by the life, by the doctrine, and by the preaching or intimation of the Gospel, which pertains to the disciples of Christ, are men, who live in the world, preserved from immorality in this life, and from eternal death in the other.

That, "*but if the salt have lost its savour*," or ceases to be salt, together with that which follows, should serve to remind Christ's disciples that they recognise their dignity; and that they maintain themselves in it, operating upon the world, as salt does upon viands.

In saying, "*wherewith shall it be salted?*" &c., He means, that just as salt ceasing to retain its savour, there is nothing that can restore it; for it is salt that gives savour to everything else; and that when salt does not retain its savour, it is of no use whatever, and therefore is cast out and trodden under foot; so, when the disciples of Christ cease to have Christian faith, with Christian morals, there is nothing that can give them perfection; for it is they, who, by their preaching, give it to all the others; if they have not Christian faith with Christian morals, they are worthless, and therefore God casts them out and despises them.

I likewise understand that it is peculiarly the office of the disciples of Christ, as such, to be the light of the world; just as by the outward light of the sun, we, with

the light of our outward eyes, see outward things, which we should not see without the light of the sun; so by the inward light of those, who have been and are disciples of Christ, we, with the light of our inward eyes, see inward, spiritual and divine things; the how, I leave to the consideration of spiritual persons, who having seen light with the light of others, and having availed themselves of the light of others, can bear testimony to this from their own experience. Where it is to be understood that the disciples of Christ, although they are the light of the world, are not so in themselves, but in their being disciples of Christ, who is in Himself the light of the world. Christ communicates His light to them, and thus they are the light of the world, through communion with Him, who says of Himself (John viii, 12), "*I am the light of the world;*" so that it may be said that between the light of Christ and that of His disciples there is the difference that there is between the light of the sun and that of the moon and of the stars; and therefore it seems, that it would be more appropriate to compare the disciples of Christ to the light of a candle; but I have not done so, because no candle is the light of the world, nor are many candles such.

And what Christ appends, "*neither do men light a candle;*" &c., serves to admonish His disciples, that they recognise their dignity and maintain themselves in it, living amongst and conversing with men, as did He, to the intent that they be as a candle in a candlestick, and not under a bushel. That clause: "*let your light so shine;*" &c., He added it, to what precedes, so as to say: "Let your light shine, as does a candle that is in a candlestick."

And when Christ says, "*that they may see your good works;*" &c., He shows that the main thing wherein the disciples of Christ are the light of the world, is in leading a Christian life, in imitating Christ; for I understand Him to call such a style of life, good works: which works are the light of the world; for in them men see Christ. Works, tainted with insincerity, I mean such as are divested of

faith and of love, are not the light of the world, not even when wrought by disciples of Christ, for it is by imitation of Christ that they are the light of the world. Christ subjoins, "*that they may glorify your Father,*" &c. He teaches that the aim which His disciples should have, in being the light of the world, is the glory of God, and not their own glory.

It is indeed truth that the true disciple of Christ can, in his own personal matters, aim at nothing other than the glory of God; for this is learned in the school of Christ, who sought to illustrate the glory of the Father, remitting the illustration of His own glory to the Father. Those, who seek their own glory are not disciples of Christ, they have not entered the school of Christ. That passage, "*cannot be hid,*" &c., I understand it thus, that just as a candle put in a candlestick makes itself seen by all, who enter the room; as the city set on a hill makes itself seen by all, who pass that way; so they, who are disciples of Christ have to know that they are the light of the world, and that for this reason they have to perform the duty of a candle in a candlestick, and of a city upon a hill, making themselves to be seen in conversation and intercourse. They, who do not act thus, either do not recognise their dignity, or allow themselves to be conquered by their pusillanimity.

V. 17-19.—Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Christ, having told His disciples what idea they should hold of the kingdom of heaven, and what idea they should hold of themselves, inasmuch as they were His disciples, proceeds to tell them the respect He willed them to have for the law and the prophets, whilst He lived amongst them; and thus He says to them, "*Think not that I am,*" &c., as though He should say: Even whilst you see that I preach and teach things differing from those which you understand in the law and in the prophets, do not think that I am come to live opposed to it or to them, and to teach contrary to it and to them, for you would very greatly deceive yourselves; nay it is a fact that I hold it obligatory to observe and to fulfil it and them, for it is most certain, that it would be more readily possible for heaven and earth to cease to exist, than that the law should be abrogated, before that everything therein typified, and everything therein commanded, be observed and fulfilled.

Wherefore I will that you know, if any one of you shall, whilst I am bodily here, break the least command of the law, and shall teach others to break it, under the pretext of preaching that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, he shall have no part in the kingdom of heaven; on the other hand, he who shall keep the law, and shall teach others to keep it, shall largely participate in the kingdom of heaven.

Thus do I understand all these Christ's words. For to affirm that by these words Christ purposed to extend the authority of the law beyond the period of His bodily presence, is not to be tolerated, since we see the opposite in evidence; for it is a fact that the law and the prophets ceased with the coming of the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit succeeding to their office, for He inwardly works in the people of God, a wholly spiritual community, that which the law and the prophets outwardly wrought upon the people of God, whilst they outwardly were so. Whence it has resulted that, although David found such relish in the law as he expresses in Psalm cxviii,\* St. Peter found

\* Now ordinarily reckoned as Psalm cxix.

it to be oppressive and grievous, as appears in Acts xv. 10, 11. And here I understand that those, who being of devout minds, find pleasure and relish in the law and in the prophets, have not yet Christian spirit, they have not yet arrived where St. Peter had arrived, they being still where David was.

Neither can it be said that Christ means but the mere fulfilment of the types, for that does not square with that passage, "*whosoever therefore shall break*," &c., and considering this, I am confirmed in the view I have stated. Wherefore it is to be understood that Christ fulfilled the law, inasmuch as He absolutely kept it throughout His life, without infraction of any the least part of it, that which no one had ever previously done; and thus the law had never been kept, and, as Christ here says, it must needs be that the law should be kept, before it was abrogated; and Christ likewise fulfilled the law, for as much as all the types of the law were fulfilled in Him; and the law was not to be abrogated, until all that was typical in it had been fulfilled in Christ.

So that the law was fulfilled by Christ, and was fulfilled in Christ, and afterwards it ceased and was abrogated, having attained the end for which it was given. It was given to serve as a schoolmaster to the people of God, as is declared by St. Paul in Gal. iii. 24, whilst the nation was in childhood, and it ceased and was abrogated when the people of God had outgrown childhood; every one of them, who belong to the people of God, having the Holy Spirit within him, keeping him in the exercise of obedience to God. They, who have not the Holy Spirit, the Christian spirit, do not belong to the people of God, for, as St. Paul says, "*If any one have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His*" (Romans viii. 9); and effectively it is so, that all respect for the law ceases in them, who, having the Christian spirit puissant within them, effectively accept the grace of the gospel, and live indeed, as far as morals are concerned, conformably to the dictates of the law; not

that it is their purpose to fulfil the law, for they would have done the same had the law never existed; simply obeying the rule of the Holy Spirit that dwells in them, who inclines them by regeneration and renovation; who works in them to live now, no longer as children of Adam, but as children of God, imitating the first begotten and only begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord.

As to the text; "*to break*" is the same as to abrogate, to annul. That expression "*till heaven and earth pass*," is a Hebraism; and that "*one jot or tittle*" is said by way of amplification. "*Till all be fulfilled*" is equivalent to, until all that is contained in the law and the prophets be fulfilled and complied with. Where he says, "*shall be called* (the least) *little*," he means, shall never be mentioned; Christ occasionally speaks thus, as in that instance, "*the first shall be last*," &c., meaning that they shall be wholly excluded; and as in that: "*the publicans and harlots shall enter into the kingdom of heaven before you*," where I understand that the publicans and harlots will be in the kingdom, whilst the high priests and elders shall be shut out of it. In saying, "*shall be called great*," he means shall be renowned. As to the reasons why God ordained that Christ should live subject to the law, and why Christ willed, that whilst He lived, that the law should be kept, I remit myself to what I have stated in a discourse upon the abrogation of the law. (Possibly in Consideration xxxvi.)

V. 20.—For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Christ, having told His disciples the nature of the kingdom of heaven which He preached, and the dignity of those, who are the children of the kingdom, and having

declared to them what was involved in the observance of the law, whilst He lived bodily in their midst, proceeds to declare to them how they should live, who, by accepting the gospel, enter into the kingdom of heaven, and He says thus: "*I say unto you, that if your righteousness,*" &c., as though he should say: and do not think that when the kingdom of heaven is come, and the law already abrogated, that you will be allowed to live following after carnal and sensual desires; for I would have you know, that if your righteousness, your purity of life, shall not be greater than is that of the scribes and Pharisees, who follow after and approve of that, which is by the law, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

I understand this to be the meaning of these words, in which, and in all those that follow in all these three chapters, I understand Christ to aim at providing against the impropriety into which they, who should accept the grace of the gospel, might easily fall, saying, we are pardoned for all that is past and future; the law is abrogated, we may then live as we please, carrying out all our carnal and sensual desires, as effectively it appears that many by that argument fell, and have fallen, one after another, who have accepted the gospel, without having been inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Christ, providing then against this impropriety, shows, in these chapters, the purity with which they must live, who enter into the kingdom of heaven by acceptance of the grace of the gospel; and thus we understand that our righteousness, that with which we enter into the kingdom of heaven, then transcends the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, when we, accepting the grace of the gospel, resolve to desire and strive to bring ourselves to live in all and everything, conformably to the doctrine which Christ here teaches us; in which consists the obligation of Christian regeneration; which obligation greatly exceeds the obligation of human regeneration, upon which the law is founded. And thus Christ goes on to compare and to confront one obli-

gation with the other, just as if to ten peasants, who should have been accepted by the Emperor as his children, the obligation of [Imperial] children should have been propounded, comparing that, with the obligation of peasants.

Where if one shall say, that thus the subjection of the gospel is harder than that of the law, I shall reply, that it is beyond all comparison harder for them, who convert the gospel into law ; seeking to justify themselves by the observance of the doctrine of Christian life ; just as it would be harder for ten peasants to observe the obligation of [Imperial] children than that of peasants, when they should pretend by their living as Imperial children to become Imperial children ; and that it would be, and is more grateful and pleasing to them, who set themselves to live according to gospel obligation ; not in order that they may be righteous, but because they are righteous ; not that they may be children, but because they are children ; for it is a fact that their knowing themselves to be righteous, and their holding themselves to be children, mortifies and kills the workings and appetites of the flesh in them, to such an extent, that becoming by freedom of the mind, masters of themselves, they do not regret the subjection of the flesh, nay, they rejoice and hold it to be whereof they may glory, that it is held in subjection.

And there is, moreover, another thing : that the obligation of the law accuses and condemns those, who, being subject to it, do not keep it with the mind and with the body ; whilst the obligation of the gospel neither accuses nor condemns any one, but is satisfied, provided the man apply his mind to it and strive to bring down his body to it. That this is so appears from St. Paul's argument in Rom. vii. and in the beginning of the eighth chapter, where having disposed of the contradiction that we, who know ourselves to be dead in Christ, find ourselves in our flesh, seeking to mortify it, he concludes that our shortcomings in this work are not imputed to our condemnation.

Whence it is to be collected, that they, who, accepting

the gospel, enter into the kingdom of heaven; it concerns them to study to live with the purity which Christ here teaches; it being their object to maintain the decorum of the children of the kingdom; who have to live not according to the obligation of human generation, for that already as to this they are dead and buried, by incorporation into the death of Christ, but according to the obligation of Christian regeneration; because in regard to this, they are resuscitated and quickened by incorporation into Christ's resurrection, whereby they are made children of God, and lovingly bound to the obligation of the children of God, He overlooking that in them which they do contrary to this obligation, through weakness or heedlessness.

I have thus dilated upon this to clear the way for apprehension of this doctrine of Christ, in order that the licentious may know that they are not in the kingdom of God; for had they been so, they would not be licentious; and in order that even they, who are weak and infirm, may rest assured and certain that they are not excluded from the kingdom, nor from the dignity of children, either by their weaknesses or their infirmities; they studying how to heal their infirmities, and thus to be strong and brave; to accomplish which, it will be expedient for them to disregard self, looking continuously to God, never forgetting that they are the children of God, and that they are in the kingdom of God. Here it is to be understood that Christ specially mentions the scribes and Pharisees, as persons, then held to be, most saintly, most observant of the law.

V. 21-26.—Ye have heard, that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill: and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but who-

soever shall say, *Thou fool*, shall be in danger of hell-fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee: leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him: lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

Christ here begins to lay down the difference between the obligation of the law, by human generation (by birth), and the obligation of the gospel by Christian regeneration, which they have to be attent to observe, who accept the grace of the gospel, giving Christian testimony of their Christian faith by their Christian life; He says "*you have heard that it was said to them of old*," &c., as though He should say, the law following the obligation of generation (birth), prohibits homicide, and threatens those who kill; therefore the Scribes and Pharisees hold themselves to be righteous because they do not kill; and they hold them to be righteous who do not kill; whilst the gospel, by the obligation of regeneration, prohibits every affection of wrath and of rancour against any man upon earth, requiring of the regenerated person not to proceed to offend any one, not even by an outward token; for even outward tokens of contempt are unworthy of the children of God, and are worthy of chastisement before God. Therefore do you endeavour to retire and to get away from all occasions that might induce you to act disrespectfully to individuals, and thus lead you to offend them.

I understand this to be the meaning of these, Christ's words, by which, He shows that, they who are His disciples, who are regenerated by His gospel, should live in the world practising the meekness with which He lived as sheep amongst wolves. *And it has evermore to be repeated, that Christ delights Himself in the affection of those, who are His, looking over that wherein they offend, through weakness.*

As to the details of the text, it is to be noted that Christ *classes anger* with murder: in saying that they both are worthy of the judgment, He means to be judged as transgressors. By "*the council*," the Greek word [*συνέδριον*] signifies the place where the sentence is delivered; the council appears to be more than the judgment, just as hell-fire is more than the council. Christ goes on to amplify the thing in order to eradicate it from our minds, knowing that anger and hatred are natural to us, and thus treating wrath and homicide as equal; He constitutes the judgment as coroner at an inquest. Over the word, "*Raca*," which is one expressive of contempt, signifying an empty fellow, He sets *the council* to deliver the sentence, whilst over, "*fool*," He sets hell-fire, which expresses the execution of the sentence. A severity of punishment that awaits all who shall depart this life Christless.

Christ, when He says, "*if thou when bringing thy gifts*," &c., means, that it concerns us, who participate in Christian regeneration, to be so upon our guard to retire from every occasion of heart-felt anger and hatred, that remembering that we have offended any Christian, or brother, let us at once leave any sacred engagement of whatever nature it may be, let us go and get reconciled with the offended brother. Where it is to be noted, that at the time when Christ spoke these words, the most sacred engagement in which a man could be occupied was the presentation of his gifts at the altar; and that Christ used this illustration, by way of hyperbole; we, in our time, should speak thus:

shouldest thou be engaged in listening to the preaching of the gospel, or to the precepts of Christian life, or shouldest thou be about to take the Lord's Supper, leave it wholly, and go to get reconciled with thy brother, for these are the most sacred occupations in which a Christian can be engaged.

Christ, in saying, "*agree with thine adversary*," &c., admonishes us, that to be free from anger and hatred, we must stop all manner of litigation with all men, coming to agreement with them, in order not to incur the disquiet into which a person is brought by them. That expression, "*lest the adversary*," is employed in connection with the hostility incident to litigation; and where He says, "*agree*" the Greek word signifies, kindly disposed, and is tantamount to agree. By "*officer*," He means the officer of the court; the word "*quadrant*" was the name of the least Roman coin (as the word "*meaja*" was that of the least Castilian). As to litigation and going to law, I remit myself to what I have stated in my exposition of 1 Cor. vi., where St. Paul sets forth, as one may say, practically, what Christ here lays down, as one may say, theoretically. And here it must be taken into consideration, that he, who has not peremptorily resolved to maintain the obligation of Christian regeneration in spite of the world, will never be able to humble himself to go to seek reconciliation with his brother, nor agreement with his adversary, for he will be careful not to prejudice his honour, that which he has (by birth) by human generation.

V. 27-30.—Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not

that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

Christ going on to lay down the difference between the obligation of the law based upon human generation (birth), and the obligation of the gospel based upon Christian regeneration, which pertains to the regenerate, says, "*you have already heard that it was said*," &c., as though He should say; the law, following the obligation of generation, prohibits adultery, and therefore the Scribes and Pharisees hold themselves to be righteous, because they do not commit adultery; and they hold those to be righteous, who do not commit adultery; now, forasmuch as the gospel, following the obligation of regeneration, prohibits every carnal emotion, I tell you, be not content with yourselves that you do not actually commit adultery, but subdue yourselves so as not to commit adultery mentally; withdrawing yourselves from and leaving everything that might lead you to adultery; so that in the meanwhile you may hold it less injurious to pluck out your eyes, and to cut off your hands, than to allow yourselves to be seduced into adultery, whether actual or mental. Thus do I understand these words, and I understand that although Christ only specifies adultery, He means every simple act of fornication; which of whatever character is most contrary to the Spirit, and most unworthy of Christians. And as to this I remit myself to what I have said in my commentary on I Cor. vi.

That expression: "*therefore if thine eye*," &c., I understand this to be said by way of counsel or of remedy against adulterous lust; and that: "*if thy right hand*," &c., I understand this to be said against the commission of the act itself. Where be it noted, that it is a mode of

speaking, in which by the right eye Christ means everything that may conduce to lust in us, and by the right hand all that may conduce to the commission of the act by us; of these things we must needs deprive ourselves however dear and however profitable they may be to us; and that the text is not to be taken literally appears from this, that though I should cut off my hands, and pluck out my eyes, I should not enter into life eternal without hands, or without eyes; and for this reason, though I were to pluck out my eyes, I should not rid myself of adulterous lust, which might enter by the ears; and were I to cut off my hands, that would not prevent consummation of the act.

To which I will say this, that the best medicine against every affection of the flesh is for a man to remember, and ever keep in mind, the obligation of Christian regeneration; recollecting that, as a member of Christ, he died upon the cross with Christ, and that Christ in slaying His flesh upon the cross slew the flesh of all of us, who are His members. He who shall not be personally resolved, determined to maintain the obligation of Christian regeneration, will never be able to reduce himself to what Christ here counsels; for in such an one the flesh will do its work; and not being able to submit itself to counsel, neither will it be subdued, so as to refrain at the least from committing adultery of the heart, and it will be in danger of falling into the commission of the act. When He says "*scandalises thee*," He means: causes thee to stumble and fall.

V. 31, 32.—It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorce: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of adultery, causeth her to commit adultery: and

whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

Since that Christ in the nineteenth chapter speaks more particularly of marriage, I reserve myself for that, although I have expressed my opinion on 1 Cor. vii., where this theory is practically exemplified. What Christ here declares is, that man has to sustain matrimony with his selected wife persistently, not putting her away, save for adultery; and that he, who shall marry the woman thus put away, will commit adultery. Whether He means the woman put away for adultery or not, I remit to those who know better (than myself). He who should wish to understand how this affair of divorce was transacted under the law, will read it in Deut. xxiv. "*A writing of divorce*," is the same as a bill of repudiation. It behoves every Christian, who marries, to see well to it, whom he selects for companion, being assured that death only can sever the bond which unites them. It is rashness to take her without consideration, and it is inconstancy to put her away without great cause.

V. 33-37.—Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne: nor by the earth, for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

Christ, carrying on His design of showing the difference

between the obligation of the law by human generation (birth) and that of the Gospel by Christian regeneration, says, "*moreover you have heard*," &c., meaning: because the law, following the obligation of generation, does not prohibit the taking of an oath, but only perjury. The scribes and Pharisees hold themselves to be righteous provided they do not perjure themselves, holding those to be righteous, who do not perjure themselves. Now, forasmuch as the Gospel, following the obligation of regeneration, does not allow the regenerate to swear at all, I admonish you not to swear, any how, nor by any thing; reducing yourselves to a simple "yea" for affirmation, and to a simple "nay" for negation; for I would have you know that all exceeding this comes forth and proceeds from an unmortified spirit, that neither feels nor knows the obligation of regeneration. This is what I understand to be the meaning of these words.

Proceeding to particularise them, it is to be understood that the law, in saying, "*thou shalt not forswear thyself*," meant, that when a man should promise anything by oath, inasmuch as, by swearing, it seemed that he promised to God, he should fulfil it; for by the non-fulfilment he became perjured. This renders that, "*but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths*," intelligible.

"*Thou shalt not forswear thyself*," is identical with the injunction of the second \* commandment of the law, "*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*."

Christ, in saying, "*thou shalt not swear*," excludes perjury and prohibits oaths, and means, that since the heaven is God's and not ours, and that the earth is God's and not

\* In Valdés' times, the first half of the sixteenth century, there was no Bible in circulation, and, to suit Papal purposes, that commandment which Protestants recognise as the second, "*Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image*," &c., had been, and remains to this day, expunged from all Roman Catholic catechisms. Valdés and Dr. Constantino Ponce de la Fuente, contemporary reformers, quote the Decalogue authorised by that Church, as known by their contemporaries, from childhood, and not as it stands in Exod. xx.

ours, and that Jerusalem is God's and not ours, and that with our heads we cannot do what we will—it is not right to swear by any one of them. In saying, "*but let your speech be*," He means, let it be your affirmation and your negation. In saying "*all beyond this*," He means whatever is added to this, "yea," and to this, "nay." Many write much, pretending to expound these words of Christ, limiting them, and adducing cases in which it is permitted to the Christian to swear. I rest satisfied with saying this; because I read that St. Paul, wishing to be believed, occasionally swore, as appears, Rom. i. 9, 2 Cor. xi. 11, Gal. i. 20, and feeling it to be certain that the Spirit of Christ spake by St. Paul, which Spirit never deviated from the obligation of Christian regeneration, I think thus: that in every oath which man makes voluntarily, not being constrained to do so, he deviates from Christian regeneration; so that the Christian is then permitted to swear, when he is constrained by man, and inspired by God, as St. Paul was inspired. The man who shall not be resolved, as against the world, to maintain the obligation of Christian regeneration, will never bring himself to this purity, for the world's honour will constrain him to swear, when he desires to be believed in that which he shall affirm.

V. 38-42.—Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away.

Christ, proceeding to establish the difference between the obligation of the law by human generation (birth), and that of the Gospel by Christian regeneration, says, “*you have already heard that it was said*,” &c., as though He should say:—Because the law that follows the obligation of generation requires that the man’s eye should be plucked out, and that his tooth should be broken, who had plucked out another’s eye, or had broken another’s tooth, &c. The scribes and Pharisees hold themselves to be righteous, provided that they live conformably to this, and hold them to be righteous who do so; whilst the Gospel, following the obligation of regeneration, requires the regenerate person to live in the present life as dead. I admonish you to be intent upon being so mortified to ambition and to interest, that you offer no resistance to him who shall maltreat you; to such an extent that, if he shall slap your face on the one cheek, you may present no resistance in defence of the other cheek, that he may slap your face again; should another sue you at the law to take away your coat, may your attachment to all these material things be so lost, that you may hold it to be indifferent, so much so as to give him up your cloak too; and that, were a man to hire you to do one thing for him, you should be so disinterested, that were it necessary, you would do two for him; and that should another ask you to give part of something that you possess, you should not take it amiss to have to give it; and that were another to ask you to lend him something, you should feel pleasure in lending him it.

Thus do I understand these words of Christ. I understand His expressed intention to be the statement that it concerns the regenerate Christian to live as though dead to worldly honour; that being insulted, he should not resent it; and so disenamoured of everything worldly, and so resolute as regards self, that he should not resist any one who should wish to take them from him, whether by violence, or by consent.

Proceeding to the analysis of the text, I understand that the law, by saying "*an eye for an eye*," meant that he, who had plucked out an eye should have one of his own plucked out, &c. Whether the judges had to do this by virtue of their office, without plaint by the party; or whether the plaint of the party was necessary, it being lawful for the Jew to go (before the court) to demand that judgment, I know not; but, by these words of Christ, I do well understand that it was amongst the Jews held to be lawful to demand vengeance, according to law, before the judges. In saying, "*resist not evil*," He means, make no resistance to him, who would maltreat you; and when He subjoins, "*nay, if any one will smite thee*," &c., He means, rather be prepared to receive the second insult than to avenge the first. So that the text is not to be understood literally in turning the other cheek; and that such is the fact appears from this, that neither did Christ do so, in the presence of Caiaphas,\* nor did His Apostle St. Paul do so, in the presence of Ananias,† but both, the one and the other, wholly refrained from offering resistance, and from defending themselves against those that buffeted and maltreated them.

That expression, "*if a man will sue thee*," &c., is almost similar to what He has told us above of a man's agreeing with his adversary, but that this is of higher perfection than that, in that Christ wills, that I be so alienated from my coat, that I not only refrain from defending it against the man, who would take it from me, by force of law, but that, were it necessary, I should likewise surrender him my cloak, becoming also alienated from this, rather than enter into rivalry or a lawsuit; and as with the coat and cloak, so with everything else. In saying "*and if any man shall compel thee*," &c., He wills that we be as liberal of our personal labour and sweat, being as regardless of self, as of our property. That expression, "*to him that asketh of thee*," &c., together with the other, "*from him*

\* John xviii. 22, 23.

† Acts xxiii. 2, 3.

*that would borrow of thee," &c.,* shows that we are to be liberal of what we possess, even when we might refrain from being so.

Here it appears, much better than it does anywhere else, that to the man, who shall not have come to a resolution with the world, as to ambition, and with himself, as to his own satisfaction, in maintaining the proprieties of Christian regeneration, it will not only not be possible, but it will be utterly impossible to reduce himself to this Christian life, either little or much; not only practically, but even sympathetically; for this worldly honour will oppose, and then sensuality will cry out. So that it is most indispensable to the man, who enters into the kingdom of heaven, by acceptance of the grace of the Gospel, in order to live according to the obligation of Christian regeneration, that he very attentively consider all these words of Christ, which all contemplate this obligation.

And as to the limitations with which many limit them, I remit myself to those, who conjecture rightly, personally adopting this sole limitation: that, desiring and striving by the grace and favour of God to reduce myself to that which I here understand Christ to require of me, I shall hold myself to be imperfect, until I shall recognise it in myself, and shall be certain that God does not impute my imperfection to me; for He does not consider me in myself, but in Christ; and I do not plead my own righteousness, but the righteousness of Christ, in whom I know and feel myself dead and risen again, quickened and glorified; and I render infinite thanks to God, who has given me this knowledge and this consciousness, and I pray Him to increase it in me, increasing in me both faith and spirituality.

V. 43-48.—Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your

enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father, which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Christ, going on to show the difference between the obligation of the law by human generation [by birth], and that of the Gospel by Christian regeneration, says, "*you have already heard that it was said*," &c., as though He should say:—The scribes and Pharisees, because they recognise none for neighbours, save the Jews only, hold themselves to be righteous, and hold those to be righteous, who exclusively love their own people, the Jews, abhorring all who are not Jews; because the law, following the obligation of generation, states, "*thou shalt love thy neighbour*;" whence they infer that he, who is not their neighbour, and is not a Jew, ought to be abhorred: whilst the Gospel, following the obligation of regeneration, requires the regenerate to live as children of God, imitating God. I admonish you, that ye love all men, of whatever state, law, or condition, they may be, holding them all to be neighbours, although they be your enemies and act hostilely towards you, abhorring you, cursing you, oppressing you, and persecuting you; because in doing thus, you will observe the decorum of the children of God, in being like Him; for that just as He sends His sun and His rain generally upon all men, so you too speak well of all

men, do good to all, and pray to God for all, making no difference between friends and enemies, since God makes none.

And you, being the children of God, are not to rest satisfied with being perfect, after the manner in which even the most depraved children of Adam are perfect, who love those that love them, and who salute those that are their brethren; but you have to aim, desire, and strive to be perfect, after the mode in which your Father is perfect. He shows His perfection, by doing good to those, who, being ungodly and unbelieving, are His enemies: do you likewise show your perfection, by doing good to those, who are your enemies.

Thus do I understand all these words of Christ; for I understand, that during the time of the law, none save the Jew was held to be a neighbour; but Christ, in the parable of the man, who fell into the hands of thieves, declared all men to be neighbours. And that that saying, "*thou shalt hate thine enemy*," was as one of those profane aphorisms, which even amongst us, are commonly held to be divine; like that, "*well-ordered charity begins at home*." And that Christ, in saying, "*bless those that*," &c., declares, that they are our enemies, who curse us, who speak evil of us, abhor us, oppress us, and persecute us; and that we are to show the love we have for them, by speaking well of them, by doing good to them, and by praying to God for them.

And I understand that Christ, in saying, "*that you may be the children*," &c., calls us to this perfection by the obligation of Christian regeneration; as though He should say:—Were you children of Adam, as you are by human generation (by birth), it would suffice that you should be perfect, as other men are; but, being as you are children of God, by Christian regeneration, it does not suffice that you be perfect, as other men, but you must be perfect, as children of God, blushing to exhibit habits inconsistent with those of the children of God, feeling more ashamed than ten

coarse, clownish rustics would do, who, having been adopted as children by the emperor, should be found with manners wholly at variance with those, which properly characterise the emperor's children.

And here it is to be understood that all of us, who, by Christian regeneration, know that we are children of God, have to aim at and to endeavour that our manners be those, which are peculiar to the children of God, learning them from the only-begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, and from God Himself; for it behoves the children to be very like their father. And herewith a reply that I wrote in answer to Question XVII. well agrees, wherein is set forth the mode in which St. Paul understands us Christians to be perfect, and how we should strive after this perfection. I am certain that he, who shall well consider perfection as laid down by Christ throughout this chapter, will, when he sees that he can neither attain it, nor even wish for it, of himself, distrust his ability to enter into the kingdom of heaven with his own righteousness; and I am likewise certain, that being brought thus to distrust, he will accept and embrace the righteousness of Christ, which in the Gospel is broadly offered to all men; he will enter with it into the kingdom of heaven, and, coming to a resolution as against the world and himself, he will begin to desire this perfection, and he will begin to train himself for it. And I am also certain that, as he shall go on training for it, so will he inwardly feel that he is in the kingdom of heaven, feeling himself regenerated, and feeling the rule and government of the Spirit.

And I hold it to be most certain that, with the consciousness of this regeneration and of this government, he will go on to train himself more and more; and that going on to train himself more and more, he will go on the more to desire this perfection; and the more he desires it, the more will he enter into the kingdom of heaven; for he will accept and embrace the grace of the Gospel, with more faith and greater affection, praying to God continually to

increase his faith and spirituality ; running after God and after Christ most affectionately ; unmindful of the things of this present life, and especially so of himself ; mindful only of God, and particularly so of His love, shown in the chastisement of Christ for that, for which he ought to have been chastised himself.

So that neither should he despair, who wanders from Christ, when he sees such exalted perfection proposed as needful to enter into the kingdom of heaven ; since it is a fact that he will, through Christ, attain that which he cannot attain by himself ; distrusting himself, but trusting in Christ ; nor should he, who is incorporated into Christ, distrust, holding himself to be alienated from Christ, when he shall find himself wanting in this perfection, not observing the decorum of a child of God, a brother of Christ ; since it is a fact, that God does not consider him in himself, but in Christ, and does not take account of his failure in Christian duty, so long as he does not intentionally sever himself from Christ. And to the man, who should wish to get on greatly in this Christian career, comprehending the perfection in which he is comprehended, I would counsel him to think the least possible of self and of worldly things ; and that he think the most that is possible of God, and of divine things, of Christ, and of things affecting Christianity.

Upon what Christ has said, as to speaking well of, and blessing of, enemies, a person might doubt, saying that Christ did not do so with the scribes and Pharisees, who were His enemies, as we shall see in Chapter xxiii. ; and that neither did Paul do so with pseudo-apostles, who were his enemies, as appears in all his epistles. To which it may be replied that Christ spoke evil of the scribes and Pharisees, and that St. Paul spoke evil of the pseudo-apostles, with no vindictiveness of mind ; but to strip them of the credit they had with the people, by which they diverted the people from God ; so that Christ spake evil of some, because they, as enemies to God, diverted the people

from Him ; whilst St. Paul spake evil of others, because they, as enemies of Christ, diverted the people from Christ and from the Gospel, carrying them away to Moses and to the law.

And then some one will say : I too, may speak evil of those who are inimical to me, for they are the enemies of God and of Christ. To which I shall answer : that it is safer to speak evil of no one ; for the human mind is very prone to passion ; whilst the Christian ought to be wholly free from passion ; and that, exceptionally, he ought to speak evil of those, who shall be his enemies, thus ; when it shall appear to him to be right to do so, for the confirmation of Christian truth, having such self-mastery as not to yield to passion ; and evincing great modesty and great meekness in his evil speaking, so that his hearers may know that he does not delight in evil speaking, and that he does not do so passionately.

Some Christian, too, may desire to know the reason why Christ, who has spoken upon so many things in this chapter, comparing Jewish perfection and righteousness with Christian perfection and righteousness, should not have touched upon the first commandment, on the worship of God and the love of God ; nor upon the third (our fourth), on keeping holy the Sabbath day ; nor upon the fourth (our fifth), on the honour due to father and mother ; He having laid down or touched upon all the other commandments of the decalogue.

And to such a person I should reply thus :—As to the first commandment, which affects the worship and love of God, I should say that Christ did not touch upon it because the law assigns such perfection to it, that it is impossible to increase it, whether it be in Exod. xx., where worship is enjoined, or in Deut. vi., where love is commanded. As to the third (fourth), which affects the hallowing of the Sabbath, I should say that Christ did not touch upon it, because this His instruction did not affect the time in which he delivered it, when the Sabbath was

kept, but for the time of the kingdom of God, in which there is no difference between one day and another, all days being to the Christian a continuous sabbath as to sanctification. As to the fourth (fifth) commandment, which affects the honouring of father and mother, I should say that Christ did not touch upon that, because it was not His intention to instruct us in the obligation (of birth) of human generation, by which we are bound to father and mother, but in the obligation of Christian regeneration, by which we have to renounce the obligation of human generation, as I have stated in an answer to Question XXI. Here, indeed, I shall say this, that Christ, having throughout this argument, aimed at teaching us how to repress and mortify our natural affections and appetites, in order, that having mortified what is natural, there might be room for that which is spiritual, and it being natural to man to honour and support his parents, He found no motive why He should here make mention of it, nor could He possibly have added perfection beyond that given to it by the law.

This is what I at present feel in regard to this chapter, and I pray to God to bring me to such a pitch that I may recognise the perfection in myself, which, in reading this chapter, in expounding it, and in meditating upon it, has been presented to me as what I ought to have, to comprehend that perfection in which I am comprehended, through acceptance of the Gospel, and incorporation into Christ.

## CHAPTER VI.

VI. 1-4.—Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father, who is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: And thy Father who seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

Christ has shown, in the preceding chapter, that the kingdom of heaven must be inward and spiritual, that they who are the children of the kingdom are the salt of the earth, and that they are the light of the world; that the law must survive, until that it had been kept by Him and fulfilled in Him; and that the obligation of the Gospel, based upon Christian regeneration, is much more perfect than the obligation of the law based upon human generation (birth); and that the perfection of Christian life in the kingdom of heaven is very different from the perfection of Jewish life in the kingdom of the law, He now proceeds to instruct His regenerated ones as to how they should regulate themselves in outward works, which they do from religion and piety, such as alms, prayer, fasting, &c.

Here His intention is not to bring them to aim at being held to be saints by men of the world, for this pretension

involves many things that are objectionable ; the principal one being competition with saints of the world, such as were the scribes and Pharisees. And speaking first of alms, He says, "*take heed not to*," &c., as though Christ should say : The scribes and Pharisees, wishing to be held to be saints, are constantly striving to procure that the alms, which they give, should be public and manifest to all ; and that, for their almsgiving, they receive, as recompense, their recognition as saints, getting what they aim at ; whilst you are not to aim to be held to be saints, by men of the world, but to be saints before God ; to comprehend the holiness in which you are comprehended ; be upon your guard, that in your almsgiving, there be no wish to be seen of men, in any way, blended therewith ; for unless you do thus, you witness against yourselves, that you do not give for God's sake, but for the world's, and God will not reward you.

I understand this to be the meaning of these words, in which Christ's purpose is to uproot from the minds of His disciples, from those who participate in Christian regeneration, every hypocritical affection ; which, coming veiled with the mantle of religion, is the pest peculiar to Christian regeneration, being most contrary to Christian and spiritual life, which is most alien to every appearance of sanctity. And thus it is most certain, that he, who is most holy in the eyes of the world, which judges from without, is the least holy before God, when he wishes the world to hold him for a saint ; and it likewise holds, that he, who is the most holy before God, who judges from within, is the least holy in the eyes of the world, because he well guards himself against being held for a saint by the world. And under this name "*world*," I understand all, who are without Christian spirit, and therefore without Christian regeneration.

Here one might doubt, and say this is directly contrary to what Christ has above taught, saying, let our light shine before men like a candle in a candlestick, in order

that they may see our good works, &c. To which it might be replied that Christ there speaks of works that cannot be feigned, that are peculiarly Christian, that are learned from Christ Himself; such are humility of mind, modesty, meekness, sincerity, with resolute mortification and vivification; which things, being wrought in us by the Spirit of God, redound, not to our glory, but to God's; whence it is that he, who really possesses them, does not flatter or prize himself upon them, recognising no peculiar virtue in them: whilst that here Christ speaks of works that can be feigned, that can be wrought by the spirit of man, which, being for the most part our own, redound to our own glory; and it is so, that he, who does these works, most usually flatters and prizes himself upon them; and is gratified at being prized and esteemed upon their account, recognising peculiar virtue, mercy, and generosity in them; for these are works that the world prizes and esteems, holding them to be most saintly, who are most engaged in them.

And if there shall be another who, taking occasion from these words, "*recompense and reward*," shall say that Christ wills that we work in order to merit, he might be told two things:—*First*, let him observe that Christ was speaking with men, who had not yet received the spirit of children; they had not yet entered into the kingdom of God, for it was not yet come, and such are ever moved by interest; and that had He spoken with men, who had already been children, He would not have proposed to them recompense or reward, but the obligation of children only; and *the second*, that man may indeed work from the motive of recompense or reward, provided that he does so as mere man, as a mercenary, and as a servant, but not as a regenerate Christian, not as a friend or as a child; to whom it is peculiar to work purely for love, without having any regard to interest.

And if there shall be another, who desires to know wherein this remuneration spoken of by Christ consists,

I shall answer him, that it does not consist in immortality and eternal happiness, for this is given to those, who accept the grace of the Gospel through the righteousness of Christ; but in the increase of that felicity, which I understand will be greater or less, as man shall leave this present life, more or less mortified and vivified; because, as I have elsewhere repeatedly written (Consid. xxxix.), I understand that vivification corresponds with mortification, and that the glory of the resurrection will correspond with vivification.

To him, who shall desire to know whether it will be Christian occupation to work with the intention of augmenting the glory of His resurrection, I will say, that the regenerate Christian has lost self-love, and that he is wholly transformed into the love of God, and that, it being thus, he does not work for self-glory, present or future, but only for the glory of God: and that they work for the glory of God, who, in giving alms, purpose that the person receiving them should not be ashamed of, or confused at, the trust he has in God.

This word alms, in Greek, *ἐλεημοσύνη*, is derived from *ελεος*, mercy, for he that gives alms practises mercy, nay, all works of mercy are alms. The same word in Hebrew is derived from justice, either because it is just that the man who can, should assist him, who is helpless; or, because the Jews justified themselves by giving alms, practising works of charity, aiming to complement by them, that wherein they failed in the fulfilment of the law: and they are all Jews, who practise works of charity with this design; and it is impossible, but that they should work with this design, who do not recognise themselves just in Christ, who have not even accepted the righteousness of Christ into their minds; for only those [who have accepted this righteousness] work not to be righteous, but because they are righteous; they work being inspired and not taught; and they work from love, and not from interest.

When Christ says "*do not sound a trumpet*," He means,

do not seek to be seen of men. “*Hypocrites*” are they, who appear to be what they are not; like actors upon the stage, who personate others than themselves. I have already stated that “*synagogues*” are public places or halls, where the Jews assembled to hear doctrine. When He says, “*let not thy left hand know*,” &c., He means, do it in the most secret manner that it shall be possible for thee to do it. In saying, “*otherwise*,” He means: and if you do it in any other manner, if you do not do it thus, &c.

VI. 5-15.—And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret; and thy Father who seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if

ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Christ, having stated how the regenerated Christian ought to regulate himself, when practising works of charity, in order not to compete in apparent sanctity with the scribes and Pharisees, who are saints of the world, proceeds to tell how he should regulate himself in prayer, and what he should pray for. As to the manner, He lays down two things: *the one*, that it be in secret, contrary to the scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, who, professing to be more holy than others, and striving to be held and esteemed such, pray in public; and *the other*, that it be in few words, contrary to the Gentiles, who thought to be heard for their much speaking, as we read of the priests of Baal (1 Kings xix. 26-29).

Christ wills that the vocal prayer of the regenerated Christian combine these two parts; and I say the vocal, for the mental needs not to be restricted, for men do not see that, nor does it need verbal regulation, since it does not consist of words; and I call the Christian's desire, which seeks to obtain something of God, mental prayer; and just as every one can desire at any time and in any place, without its being seen, so every Christian can pray at any time and in any place, without being seen.

As to what the Christian should pray for, Christ lays down seven things, of which the three first principally design the glory of God, one (the fourth) our bodily sustenance, and the other three our preservation in the righteousness of the kingdom of God. And because I have embodied in a Consideration (lxxi.) what I then understood as involved in this most holy prayer, I remit myself to what I have there stated, and shall state here what I now understand; and thus I say that the *first* thing a Christian has to pray for, is, that the name of God be hallowed; and it is then hallowed, when God is glori-

fied in His works, and by His works, and this generally in all His creatures, and by them all. This petition, with desire, cannot be (offered) save by those who hallow God, who love God's glory and not their own glory: all others desire their own sanctifications and their own glorifications.

The *second*, may the kingdom of God come quickly, may that time come quickly, in which, Christ having delivered the kingdom up to His eternal Father, God shall be all in all. This petition cannot be (offered) with desire, save by those, who are certain that it will be well with them in the kingdom of God: all others rather fear this kingdom, than desire it. I understand that the disciples during Christ's life (among them) supplicated, what Christ suggested they should supplicate, the speedy coming of the Holy Spirit, which has placed them in the kingdom of God, and I understand it to be Christ's will, that we supplicate His speedy coming to judgment.

The *third*, that that will of God, which pleases and satisfies God, be done and carried into effect here upon earth, in the same manner as it is done and executed in heaven. This petition cannot be (offered) with desire, but by those, who love God, and are certain that they are loved by God; for they, who are not of these, desire to do their own wills, and they distrust the will of God.

The *fourth* thing is, that God provide us with the necessary maintenance for our bodily support. And none can supplicate this, desiring it, save those, who have the poverty of spirit, of which we have spoken at the commencement of the preceding chapter; for only these, having renounced favour of creatures, depend wholly upon God: all others, trusting in their riches and depending upon them, do not desire to be sustained by the favour of God. In saying "*this day*," it shows that this has to be asked of God every day; and in calling the bread, "*ours*," and not *Thine*, I think that He suggests that we are sustained by it, and it appears throughout Holy Scripture to be usual.

The *fifth* thing is, that He forgive our errors and failings, those wherein we deviate from the obligation of Christian regeneration and Christian decorum, since we also forgive men their errors, and none can supplicate this, desiring it, save those, who, following after the perfection laid down by Christ in the preceding chapter, go on to attain it; for these alone forgive men the injuries they do them; not that God should on that account forgive them theirs, but in order to fulfil the obligation of Christian regeneration, and to maintain Christian decorum; all others either seek to be forgiven, without forgiving; or they do not recognise themselves as culpable, not recognising the obligation of Christian regeneration, nor Christian decorum.

The regenerate in Christ delight to say to God, “*forgive us our debts*,” &c., for although they know and feel themselves to be pardoned in Christ and by Christ, it pleases them to humiliate themselves, confessing that they have faults, as did David; who, although he was certain that God had forgiven him his sin, did not cease to ask forgiveness of God, confessing himself to be guilty; and it pleases them too to constrain themselves to forgive, or to admit that they have to forgive, in order to uproot every affection of wrath and of rancour from their minds.

The *sixth* thing is, that if in order to humiliate and to mortify us, we be tried with temptations, let us not be conquered or overcome by them. Only they can ask this, desiring it, who trust in God, and know their own malignity, which needs to be humbled and mortified: all others would wish to escape every form of temptation.

The *seventh* thing is, that we be delivered from the evil to which this our mortal life is subject; so that evils may not divert us from the kingdom of heaven, and thus from God, and from Christ. This none ask, desiring it, save those, who depend upon God, who have renounced all favour of creatures: all others, trusting in themselves and

in creatures, seek to obtain this deliverance by themselves and by creatures.

Thus do I understand these seven things that Christ teaches us to ask of God, meaning that although many ask them with the mouth, only they ask them with the heart, desiring them, who, having accepted the grace of the Gospel of Christ, and being regenerated by Christ, have entered into the kingdom of God through Christ.

By that addition which Christ makes to His prayer, saying, "*therefore if ye shall forgive,*" &c., I understand His intention to be to oblige us to forgive, treating us as imperfect, as being swayed by interest: if you will forgive, you shall be forgiven; and if you will not forgive, neither shall you be forgiven. From which words, it is not to be gathered, that by forgiving, we merit to be forgiven; but, it may well be gathered, that they who forgive, may rest assured by these words of Christ, that they are forgiven; and by those same, they, who do not forgive, may rest assured, that they are not forgiven.

Christ knew well how natural to man is the spirit of vindictiveness, and seeking to mortify and kill it, in His own people, so that not a trace of it should remain, He puts it before them, that they will not be forgiven, unless they forgive; although, as I have stated, they are not forgiven, because they forgive; nay, they forgive, because they are forgiven; and thus it is, that, feeling themselves forgiven by God, they are lovingly constrained to forgive.

Here, should some one ask me: what is the reason, why, in the doctrine of Christian life, forgiveness is more insisted upon, than offence, I shall allege two things in reply: *the one*, that the human mind is more solicited and more inclined not to forgive, than to offend; and *the other*, that offence is generally attended with wrath and cholera, whence the man loses his wits, and thus acts heedlessly, and is therefore less to blame, than when he does not forgive; for the man is then more self-possessed, he is conscious of what he is doing, and is therefore more culpable.

I say then, that in the doctrine of Christian life I understand these two reasons to justify the attaching of greater importance to forgiveness than to offence.

To the Christian, who, influenced by those words of Christ, "*for your heavenly Father knows*," &c., shall say, "if God knows what it is that I want, before I ask Him for "it, why do they tell me to ask Him for it? Of what use "is prayer?" one might answer him, that what Christ states is a fact: that God does know our wants, before we tell Him them in our prayers; and even more, that He knows how to succour us in them; but He wills that we should, in our imperfection, recur to Him, in order that when He shall give us what we shall ask of Him, we, recognising His mercy and His generosity in so doing, may rest assured that He loves us; and thus we are moved to love Him. The human heart is so incredulous, as to holding itself to be beloved of God, and is so hard, that to love God, it needs to be assured and softened by all these things.

And here I will add this, that they, who know themselves to be the children of God, regenerated and renewed by Christ, and in Christ, should in everything disregard themselves, and refrain from thinking of their interests; whether of those which pertain to this life, or of those which pertain to the future life; casting all their care upon God and upon Christ, ever thinking upon God and upon Christ, and upon the things that are God's and Christ's: they may rest assured, by these words of Christ, that God cares for them and thinks for them, without their asking of Him what they require of Him; nay, that it is so, that by so much the less they think upon themselves, thinking upon God, so much the more does God think of them. Could we men bring ourselves to believe this truth, we should live in this present life a heavenly and divine life. God grant me grace to bring myself to do it. The prayer of the Christian must ever proceed full of faith and of assurance that God is about to give him what he in prayer supplicates. The prayer that does not go thus is not a Christian one.

VI. 16-18.—Moreover when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father, who is in secret: and thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

Fasting stands connected with prayer, for Christ, having spoken of prayer, speaks of fasting, wherein He wills, that in order to avoid amongst His own people any competition with saints of the world, that there be no demonstration or outward appearance. Where it is to be understood, that forasmuch as Jewish fasting consisted in privation of all the gratifications that man delights in, apart from God, hypocrites desiring to be held to be good fasters, and thus to be very holy and just, presented themselves sad and disfigured. This demonstration is what Christ here rebukes.

In saying, "*anoint thy head*," &c., He means: if indeed thou shouldest fast, look as though thou didst not fast. The Jews were wont to anoint their heads and to wash their faces, as a token of joy and satisfaction. Effectively, Christ wills that His Christians elude human prudence and human judgment, by doing what they ought to do, and by dissimulating, as though they did it not. And here it is to be noted that Christ spoke accommodating His teaching to His times; had He spoken in our times, He had possibly found more to censure in relation to fasting.

As to the rest, just as the Christian's whole life ought to be one continuous prayer, so likewise ought it to be one continuous fast; a continuous abstinence from everything in which sensuality revels, or in which we sensually revel, either in creatures or with creatures, not being a spiritual delight. They who do not fast thus, in fasting, fast as

does the world, but they do not fast as God wills; and the fasting of such people is not connected with prayer, and therefore is not Christian, nor even Jewish, save so far as it is ceremonial. The Christian's design in fasting, which consists in afflicting the flesh, is to be solely that which St. Paul shows that he had in his fasts, where he says (1 Cor. ix.), that he disciplined his body to get the mastery over his affections and lusts.

VI. 19-21.—Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust do corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

This Christ's admonition, I understand to pertain to what He has said above, respecting alms, prayer, and fasting, and thus I understand that they lay up treasures upon earth, who, engaged in works of charity, in prayer, and in fasting, design that men shall hold and esteem them saints; whilst they lay up treasures in heaven, who, engaged in works of charity, in prayer, and in fasting, secrete themselves from men, and discover themselves to God. For just as they, who lay up treasures upon earth, have their hearts on earth with worldly men, have earthly, low, and vulgar hearts; so they, who lay up treasures in heaven, have their hearts in heaven, with God and with Christ, have heavenly, exalted, and divine hearts. They, who lay up treasures upon earth, have Jewish minds, whilst they, who lay up treasures in heaven, have Christian minds.

The rust and the moth, with which treasures laid up upon earth are corrupted or ruined, I understand to be vainglory and ambition; and the thieves, who steal these treasures, by

digging through the walls, I understand to be infernal spirits, against all which the treasures laid up in heaven are secure, for there is neither vainglory, nor ambition, nor are there infernal spirits there. Ay, and it is a fact that he, who, engaged in works of charity, in prayer, and in fasting, only looks to God, is thereby preserved from vainglory and from ambition; neither does he give occasion for the exercise of the devil's persuasions, knowing that, in his works of charity and in his prayers, whether by himself or by others, there is no goodness nor any perfection beyond that which God gives, in His being pleased to accept them as good; besides he knows that if he fasts, it is to deliver himself from depravity; and thus in fasting he knows his imperfection, so that there remains nothing whereof to glory or to pride himself upon, except his imperfection.

After this mode do I understand these words, although I shall not contend with him, who desires that they be understood literally, to speak of those who lay up treasures upon earth; whose minds are intent upon amassing wealth in temporal riches, which are subject to rust, and to moth, and to thieves: whilst they, who lay up treasures in heaven, have their minds intent upon amassing spiritual wealth, riches that are not subject to rust, to moth, or to thieves.

VI. 22, 23.—The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness.

Christ's suggestive illustration, "*that the light of the body*," &c., I understand to be a most excellent expedient wherewith to lay up treasures in heaven. Where it seems that Christ apprehends the analogy existing between the

inner man and the outer man ; for that, just as the bodily eye is the bodily light of the outer man, so human reason is the natural light of the inward man ; and for that, just as when the bodily eye is sound and bright, all the outward man is sound and bright ; and that when it is deranged and disordered, all the outward man becomes deranged and disordered ; so when human reason is sound and bright, all the inward man is sound and bright, and when it is deranged and disordered, all the inward man is deranged and disordered.

Where it should be understood, that human reason, natural light, the knowledge of good and evil, which man acquired by the loss of spiritual light, is ever deranged and disordered, in more than a thousand ways, by all men, who are mere men, neither regenerated nor renewed by the Holy Spirit ; whilst it is sound and bright in men regenerated and renewed by the Holy Spirit, being clarified and purified by spiritual light, in whom only the inward man is clear and resplendent.

This being understood, it is easy to understand that Christ designs by these words to admonish us, that our human reason, our natural light, the knowledge of good and evil, does not suffice to make our inward man so clear and resplendent as to enable it to lay up treasures in heaven as we ought to treasure them up, we, who are in possession of the kingdom of heaven, through acceptance of the Gospel and Christian regeneration ; because that which is light in us is obscured and darkened, whilst it is not purified and clarified by spiritual light : and since such is the fact, we ought to be attent upon the attainment of this spiritual light, procuring it and supplicating it of God, with faith and with importunity. And the more to invite us and move us to this, He says, "*for if the light that is in thee,*" &c., meaning—the reason within thee, which is thy light, being darkened, thou mayest think that all other inward things which in themselves are not light but darkness, are all in the same predicament.

By the single (sound) eye I understand the opposite of a bad or corrupt one.

VI. 24-34.—No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek;) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the

morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Christ, having laid down the qualifications and joys of those, who are in the kingdom of heaven, their dignity, their obligation to be saints before God, and not to wish to be saints before the world, proceeds to state the security, with which they can and ought to live in the present life, who are children of the kingdom of heaven ; ceasing to care about themselves, by casting all their care upon God, assured that God cares for them, and that He will better provide them with all that shall be necessary, whilst they cease to be careful about themselves, by caring for God, than if they had provided for themselves, ever thinking about themselves.

Here I think it right to say this, that if we, who call ourselves Christians, looking steadily at what our Lord Jesus Christ designed by these words, without glossing or limiting them with natural light, which without spiritual light is obscure ; were we to examine ourselves well, how far we confide in them, and wherein the solicitude, which we cherish with relation to what we have to eat, to drink, and to dress, differs from that held by those who do not call themselves Christians, I am sure that we should be confounded and ashamed, recognising that we usurp the name of Christians, for that as to our confidence in Christ's words, we are but on a par with those, who do not call themselves Christians.

I state this from what I have known of myself, and in myself, and would to God that I should not have to state by what I know of myself at present ! and alas ! poor me ! that that which I most feel, that that which most grieves me and wounds me, that reaches to my very soul and pierces my heart, is, that if by my confidence in these words of Christ, which affect the present life, I should judge to what extent I confide in other words of Christ that affect the life eternal, I find myself so estranged from

Christ, that I have scarcely any portion in Him ; since it is a fact that neither do these words which pertain to the present life affect any persons except those who believe them ; nor do the others, which pertain to the life eternal, affect any persons except those who believe them ; and if from my confidence in these I have to judge what assurance I have in the others, I am a disappointed man.

In this agony and affliction I have two things to console me. *One* is the confidence which I have in God, that since He has given me the desire which I have to depend wholly on Him, as well in that which pertains to the present life as in that which pertains to the life eternal, He will also give me the consummation of the wish which He has given me, and thus I shall live very happily and very contentedly. Whilst *the other* is, that I, knowing it to be a fact, that the human mind brings itself much more easily to confide in God, in things that man knows he cannot attain by himself, than in those which he thinks he can attain by himself, by his industry and by his diligence ; and I knowing, concerning myself, that this truth is firmly and constantly impressed upon my mind that I cannot anyhow or in any way attain life eternal, except by remitting myself to the righteousness of Christ, embracing it, and cleaving to it; this [other] truth, not being so impressed upon my mind that I am unable, either by my industry or by my diligence, to attain what pertains to the present life, I form no judgment as to my belief in Christ's words that pertain to the life eternal, from what I believe of Christ's words that pertain to the present life; holding it to be certain that I trust more in those which pertain to the life eternal, because I have made up my mind that I cannot attain it by myself, than in those which pertain to the present life, because I have not so made up my mind as to my inability to attain them by myself.

With all this, I do not cease to hold myself to be most imperfect whenever I read these words of Christ, neither do I cease to desire to realise their perfection, and to sup-

plicate of God, that He, for His own glory, may give it me; and to devote myself with all my mind to them, labouring to recognise their effect in me.

And coming to Christ's words, I understand, that knowing how much man is obstructed in the regard that he ought to have for God, to be always in union with God, and to promote the glory of God, by the care that he takes of these corporeal and outward things, Christ designs by these words to assure us, who are His, that God will provide us with corporeal things, in order, that relieved from care as to them, we may yield up ourselves, and apply ourselves, wholly to spiritual things.

And thus He begins by saying, "*No one can serve two masters*," &c. And declaring what these two masters are, He says, "*ye cannot serve God and mammon* :" meaning that it is impossible for a man to attend to the material things of the present life and to the spiritual things of the life eternal, without failing either in the one or in the other; so that he must make up his mind to attend to the one, or to the other. And it being Christ's will, that we, who are regenerated by Him, make up our minds to attend to spiritual things, ceasing to care for material things, He says, "*therefore I say unto you : take no thought*," &c., as though He should say : Now, since it is a fact that you cannot serve God and mammon, be attent to serve God, and cease to care for mammon, not worrying yourselves as to what ye should eat and drink to sustain life, nor worrying about dress wherewith to clothe your bodies.

Christ, desiring to persuade us that it is useless anxiety, says : "*what, and is not the life more than*," &c., meaning : since God has given you lives which are much more than the food by which they are sustained; and since He has given you bodies which are much more than the clothes by which they are covered, you may rest assured that as He has given you that which is more, He will also give you that which is less, and being assured lose all care respecting it. And Christ's will being that this should

penetrate our minds, He holding it to be most important, says: "*behold the birds of the air*," &c., meaning: since you see the beneficence that God exerts towards the birds of the air, providing them with food without their labour and without their solicitude, you may rest assured that He will do the same with you, and so much the more so, as you are more excellent than birds.

Christ uses the same argument in relation to the lilies of the field, as in that of the birds of the air. And the more effort He exerts to render us capable of receiving this truth, in order that we may lose this solicitude, so much the more do I think of our need of losing it; and so much the more am I ashamed, when upon reflection I find myself not stript of it: and I pray to God that He may so deliver me and strip me of it, that I may no more think of what I have to eat, than do the birds of the air; and that I may no more think of what dress I have to put on, than do the lilies of the field; for until I recognise myself in this condition, I shall hold and adjudge myself to be imperfect. By that expression, "*which of you by taking thought*," &c., Christ means, that since it is a fact that all our carefulness is inadequate to cause the growth of our bodies, and that without thought on our part God gives growth as He pleases, why should we not lay aside all care, remitting ourselves to our gracious God for the sustenance of our bodies, since, in spite of ourselves, as it were, we have to give up all thought as to influencing the stature of our bodies?

That expression, "*O ye of little faith*," is one of great power, *for such, in truth, are we, all of us, who hear these words of Christ, and do not at once make up our minds to lay all care aside, as to that which concerns the present life, transferring all our care to that which concerns the life eternal.* That expression, "*for after all these things do the Gentiles seek*," is likewise of great significance, where Christ means, that we, who are the children of God, regenerated by Him, and in Him, ought not to heed that which

occupies the heathen, for by regeneration and by renewal we have ceased to be Gentiles, we have ceased to be children of Adam, and have become children of God.

Christ then comes to the principal point. He says, "*Seek (first) then the kingdom of God,*" &c., wherein He declares that our all and only care ought to be in seeking the kingdom of God, and the righteousness of God, for it is this which pertains to the life eternal. And in saying "*all these things shall be added unto you,*" He means, that unto us, who shall seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, God will give us the one and the other, and will give us by way of addition, without our solicitude, all that we shall need, to eat, drink, and dress. Where I understand that they seek the kingdom of God, who, coming out of the kingdom of the world, renouncing the rule and government of their human prudence, enter into the kingdom of God, adhering to these words of Christ, assured that they will be fulfilled in connection with themselves, and so much the more, as they shall lose personal solicitude. They likewise seek the kingdom of God, who are certified that they will be well off there, who go on longing for the fulfilment of those words, which we have expounded in Christ's most holy prayer, which say "*may Thy kingdom come;*" and I understand that they seek the righteousness of God, who accept the general pardon which the Gospel proclaims, through the justice of God already executed upon Christ. This is the righteousness with which God justifies us, and this is the righteousness with which possession is taken of the kingdom of God. With the same, possession is defended; and with the same, it is preserved; and the same bears those who accept it to the glory of the resurrection.

Christ, in concluding this most divine and powerful admonition, says, "*Take therefore no thought for the morrow,*" &c., whence He shows that His design throughout all this has been to bring us to see the day, wherein we shall take no thought as to what we shall eat, drink, or

how be dressed on the morrow ; since it suffices that we take thought to-day for to-day, and to-morrow for to-morrow. And in saying "*sufficient unto the day is its own affliction*," Christ shows that one of human miseries is to take thought about eating and dress, although it be but for a day ; and thus do they really feel, who have the spirit of Christ, who would hold themselves to be happy, could they do without eating and without dress. Thus do I understand all these words of Christ, which put my imperfection before my eyes, so much so that I am ashamed of myself, seeing that I fall so far short of what Christ requires of me.

As to the limitations with which these words are limited, I remit myself to those who are more able than myself ; taking this up, however, for myself (as I have said), I shall hold myself to be imperfect, until I find myself as free from thought as to what I shall eat to sustain life, as are the birds of the air ; and as free from thought as to how I shall dress as are the lilies of the field. I repeat this statement, because I feel pleasure in doing it, and hence for myself I need no limitation in these words, glad of the opportunity to recognise my imperfection through them.

In every instance where He uses the word *μεριμνα μεριμνησητε, μεριμνατε*, "thought," "think," the Greek words mean more than thought ; they mean anxiety, solicitude. It is indeed true that the evangelist uses it as simply to think, as we shall see in chapter x., where Christ, in telling His disciples that they should not think as to what they should say in their defence when brought before worldly rulers, for that the Holy Spirit would speak by them, employs this same word, and there it clearly appears that the evangelist uses the word in the sense of thought. Where He says "*mammon*,"\* the Greek word signifies "*victuals*," objects of food and dress. By the word "*anima*," *ψυχη*, He means life.

\* Bengel, commenting upon this passage, says, "Mammon does not only mean 'riches,' but external goods, however few."

## CHAPTER VII.

VII. 1-5.—Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Christ proceeds to speak of the circumspection with which they, who are the regenerated children of the kingdom of heaven, ought to live amongst men of the world, and to lay the last stone of this foundation of the Christian faith; which done, it stands sound and firm against all the assaults with which it is assaulted. He says: "*Judge not.*" Where it must be understood, that to judge the lives of others is a peculiarity of saints of the world; they more especially do so of the most perfect. These judge men's lives and condemn them, when men do not live as they do. And this same proneness to judge is peculiar to the saints of God, but to the imperfect ones; for they still retain the bad habit of the saints of the world, they still savour of the root of worldly holiness, whence they were cuttings.

Wherefore this being premised, it is to be understood that Christ here, in forbidding to judge or to condemn, shows that He is speaking to two classes of persons when He says, "*Thou hypocrite, first cast out*," &c. ; for not only are they hypocrites who feign to be what they are not, but they are also hypocrites, who persuade themselves that they are, what they are not. Such are the perfect saints of the world, who, by their morality of life and by their outward acts of righteousness, hold and esteem themselves to be saints ; and such are the imperfect saints of God, who have not yet cast off the yoke of the root of worldly sanctity. And that it is a fact that the imperfect saints of God are subject to this vice of condemning the works of others, appears from St. Paul (Rom. xiv.) where he censures judgment by the imperfect, whom he calls weak ; and rebukes contempt in the perfect, to whom it is not forbidden to judge, for that they judge with spiritual light and not with natural light ; for, according to St. Paul, "*he that is spiritual judges all things*" (1 Cor. ii. 15) ; and for that in judging they do not condemn, as do hypocrites.

This being known, it is readily understood that Christ, in speaking here with the most perfect saints of the world, and with the imperfect saints of God, tells them to repress and mortify their affection (their predisposition) to judge, in order that God should not judge them. And in saying "*for with what judgment ye judge*," &c., He means the same as St. Paul (Rom. ii. 1), that he who judges another passes sentence on himself by falling into the very crime which he condemns.

This same sentence is urged again in that "*and with what measure ye mete*," &c., which words are said to be used as an adage or proverb in the Hebrew tongue, employed as between buyer and seller ; for he that sells by a measure is bound to purchase by the same ; by that which he gives, by that he receives. Christ expounding what He has stated, says, "*Why lookest thou at the mote*," &c., meaning, they who judge, have ever greater defects than have

they who are judged ; for the most perfect saints of the world are they who judge most, and ordinarily they judge God's saints, and they condemn them in some things, that are either no defects in them, as were the outward observances in relation to which Christ's disciples were condemned by the scribes and the Pharisees, or they are like the mote in the eye, compared with the beam that is in the eye of the person judging them.

In saying, "*then shalt thou see*," &c., Christ means that man is incapable of knowing the defects of others, whilst he has defects of his own ; just as one, who is bereft of vision, is incapable of curing ophthalmia in another. And because I have spoken of this judging in my commentary upon St. Paul in Rom. xiv., I remit myself to what I have said there. And from that, and from this, I take up this truly Christian doctrine, that it is the safest thing not to judge other men's works ; and I adopt this suggestion, that when I shall see any one judge another's life, I shall hold him to be either a perfect saint of the world, or an imperfect saint of God, an imperfect Christian.

VII. 6.—Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls (gems) before swine : lest they trample them under their feet and turn again and rend you.

Christ counsels spiritual persons, the children of the kingdom of heaven, who are regenerated Christians, that they should not converse about spiritual things or regeneration in the presence of men, who are either carnal or malignant, because of consequent impropriety ; that is, the carnal contemn and make a joke of things that are spiritual, whilst the malignant slander, persecute, and maltreat those, who tell them about spiritual things. The carnal despise them, because they neither understand them, nor do they feel them ; whilst the malignant per-

secute those, who present them to them, because they do not wish that others should have what they have not.

This advice is at all times very necessary, and Christians ought to dwell much upon it. Where if one should ask me, saying, If spiritual treasures are not to be presented or communicated, neither to the carnal nor to the malignant, how shall it be possible to preach the Gospel, which is holy, typified in pearls (gems), and is the true spiritual and divine treasure? and if it be not preached, how shall it be accepted?—I shall answer him, that Christ does not by these words prohibit the preaching of the Gospel, which ought to be preached to all men throughout the whole world; but He forbids argument and conversation on Christian life, and on that which is connected with it, amongst men who have not accepted the Gospel. To what purpose do I tell, in what mode Christ is Lord of God's elect, is Head of the Church of God, and is King over the people of God, to those who, not having accepted the Gospel, know nothing of God nor of Christ? What use is it that I speak of the incorporation with which man is incorporated by faith into Christ, with men who have not accepted the Gospel of Christ in their hearts? What purpose have I in showing how God, in slaying Christ on the cross, slew all them who believe in Christ, and that God, in raising Christ glorious, raised all, who believe in Christ, glorious, (doing so) to them, who do not believe in the Gospel of Christ? To what end do I propound the doctrine of Christian life, which wholly consists in mortification, to men who, forasmuch as they have not accepted the Gospel, are devoted to the world?

Be this, then, the conclusion: let the Gospel of Christ be generally propounded to all, intimating to them the general indulgence and pardon through the justice of God executed upon Christ; but the doctrine of Christian life, let it only be propounded to those, who have accepted the Gospel of Christ; and let the secrets of Christian regeneration, the privileges which they enjoy, who are

the children of the kingdom of heaven, let these only be conversed about with those, who begin to feel the fruits and effects of the Gospel in themselves, ceasing to be hogs, to be vicious and carnal; and ceasing to be dogs, to be malignant and perverse; and beginning to live purely and holily, following the obligation of Christian regeneration. And the being dogs opposed to the saints of God, I understand to be peculiar to saints of the world; for these are they who turn against them, and tear them to pieces with murmurs, with persecutions, and with martyrdoms. From whom, let the saints of God, true Christians flee, as from the plague.

VII. 7-11.—Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

This counsel of Christ is in perfect keeping, when combined with what He has said in the former chapter upon prayer; for He there teaches the children of the kingdom of heaven how to pray and what to pray for; whilst here He teaches them that to pray well is to be importunate in prayer; and He assures them that they will obtain what they shall ask in prayer. And that it is a fact, that this counsel only concerns them, who are children of God by regeneration, appears from the example that Christ adduces of a father with his son.

We are all the children of God by creation, but this

filiation does not constitute us friends of God; and we have this in common with all creatures; whilst all we, true Christians, are incorporated into Christ, children of God by regeneration, which filiation does constitute us friends of God; for that God does not contemplate us by what we are in ourselves, but by that which we are, incorporated into Christ; in whom we are just and holy, because He is just and holy. Christ tells these children that they should ask, that they should seek, and that they should knock at God's door, whenever they shall desire to have anything of God; promising them that they shall obtain from God all that they shall desire. And to confirm them the more in this truth, in order that they thus may be better assured of it—for *it is assurance that gives life to prayer*—He says, “*for every one that asketh*,” &c., meaning, that from this general they can take this particular, that if they ask, that if they seek, and that if they knock, they shall realise their desire.

That, “*what man is there peradventure*,” &c., is to confirm us the more in the confidence in which Christ wills that we be most confirmed and most assured; and therefore whenever He speaks of the confidence that we ought to have in God, He insists more upon that than upon anything else; and thus says here, You are evil, and give your children what they ask you, and do you doubt but that your Father, who is most excellent, will give you what you ask of Him?

Here if one shall say: I doubt, because I do not hold myself to be a child; my reply to him shall be, that if he has accepted the Gospel, he insults Christ in not holding himself to be a child; showing that effectively he does not believe that Christ is a child; for, had he believed it, having accepted the Gospel, and being by it incorporated into Christ, he could not doubt as to his being a child. And if another shall say: I doubt; for, although I hold myself to be a child, I hold myself to be a bad one; I shall answer him, that if he hold himself to be a child, by

his being good, he has reason to doubt, for this is a very grave error, attributing that to himself which is not his ; and that, if by his incorporation into Christ, he does not hold himself to be a good child, he very greatly insults Christ, in doubting of the goodness, righteousness, and holiness of Christ, in that he does not recognise himself, by incorporation into Christ, to be good, just, and holy.

Let every Christian incorporated into Christ by acceptance of the Gospel stop his ears. I say, let him stop the ears of body and mind, against human and diabolic suasions, that would disturb his confidence in prayer ; and let him say thus : Christ is God's child, and I, incorporated into Christ, am a child of God : Christ, God's good child, is just and holy, and [so] I am a good child of God, just and holy ; and thus let him ask of God with confidence, not doubting, nay being certain that he will obtain what he asks, basing his assurance upon this promise of Christ ; and it will issue in his obtaining what he shall ask.

What has to be asked is stated in the preceding chapter. Where it is to be understood that it concerns us, who are Christians, to examine our desires, when we are moved to pray ; to see whether we are moved to ask one of the seven things which Christ teaches us in the Lord's prayer that we should ask, in order that when they shall be conformable to them, we may embrace them and ask of God their accomplishment ; and, when they shall be contrary, that we reject them, and do not apply ourselves to supplicate their accomplishment. That, "*if ye then that are evil,*" &c., is worthy of consideration, as against our depraved nature through the first man's sin, through which it is as natural to us to be bad, as, had Adam not sinned, it would have been natural to us to have been good. In Adam we are all bad, and in Christ we are all good, who accept the general indulgence and pardon which is proclaimed to us in the Gospel of Christ. Instead of that which here says "*shall give good things,*" St. Luke

says (chap. xi. 13), “*shall give the Good Spirit*,” meaning the Holy Spirit. I state this desiring to persuade Christians to ask of God that He give them His Holy Spirit, certain that He will give it to them, founding their assurance upon this promise of Christ.

VII. 12.—Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

As to this passage, I neither understand how it depends upon the words that precede it, nor how it fits in with those that follow. St. Luke places them in association with the perfection that St. Matthew places in the fifth chapter, and puts them as the conclusion of it all; and then they fit in very well, for they include all that is there stated; for it is so, that he who shall do unto men what he could wish that they should do unto him, will never offend any one. The obligation of human generation requires that man should not do to another, what he would not wish that another should do unto him; whilst the obligation of Christian regeneration, going further, requires that he should do what he could wish should be done unto him. Whence it is to be understood that they greatly deceive themselves, who put moral philosophy upon a par with Christian doctrine; for moral philosophy does not come up to the obligation of human generation, whilst Christian teaching goes far beyond it.\*

Christ, in saying, “*for this is the law and the prophets*,” &c., means that the law and the prophets designed bringing man to this, and that he who shall bring himself up to it, will fulfil both it and them; whilst he, who shall fail to do so, will be condemned by it and by them; unless he shall have embraced the righteousness of Christ, which frees from all condemnation those, who do embrace it, as St. Paul states in Rom. viii. 1.

\* Question XXIII.

VIII. 13, 14.—Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Because the flesh, which ever seeks and desires to walk freely and unobstructed, and will in no way be restrained, might give way, feeling the perfection that Christ here proposes to be beyond its powers; Christ, willing that His regenerated ones be not led astray, scared by such perfection, says, "*Enter ye in at the strait gate,*" &c. Where it seems that Christ conceived of two gates and of two ways: one gate and one way arduous and difficult, and the other gate and the other way easy and pleasant; the difficult one leading to life eternal, and the easy one leading to death eternal. And it is to be understood that just as that which leads to eternal death is easy, is sweet and palatable to the flesh, although the mind, when revolving it, finds therein difficulty and bitterness, without relish; so the way that leads to eternal life is difficult, bitter, and insipid to the flesh, although easy, sweet, and palatable to the mind regenerated by Christ.

These words understood thus are not contradictory of what Christ states in chapter xi. 30, that His yoke is easy, &c.; for He there calls faith, with which the Gospel is accepted, a yoke. He calls it sweet, for there is nothing sweeter in the world than to feel remission of sins and reconciliation with God through Christ; and when calling the doctrine of Christian life a burden, He calls it light, for such it effectively is to those, who, having taken the yoke of faith, feel the effects of it. And He here calls the doctrine of Christian life, of which He goes on to discourse, the strait gate and the narrow way, meaning, that it is such for flesh not mortified by faith.

Christ, then, here relieves the difficulty of Christian life by stating, that the man who walks by it is on the road to immortality and eternal life; just as the man who follows a worldly life is on the road to perdition and eternal death.

In that, "*few there be that find it,*" He means, that they will be few, who will go to life eternal, compared with the multitudes, who will go to death eternal. And the reason why they are few, is because that they, who take up the yoke of Christian faith, without which the way of Christian life is never found, are but few. Christian faith is so delicate a dish that few stomachs can bear it, and for that reason St. Paul said (2 Thess. iii. 2), that "*all have not faith;*" and since few have faith, they are few who find the way of Christian life, which is the road that leads to life eternal.

Whence it is to be understood that they, who, by accepting the Gospel, begin to live like Christians, begin likewise to enjoy eternal life, for they begin to live a life similar to that which we have to live in the life eternal; but this they never believe, who experience nothing of it. Then let us all, who have accepted the yoke of Christian faith, labour to enter by the strait gate, to walk in the narrow way, setting up before us the obligation of Christian regeneration, mortifying all our carnal desires, never satisfying ourselves in anything that gratifies sensuality, certain that we shall attain immortality and eternal life with Jesus Christ our Lord.

After having written this, considering that expression, "*and few there be that find it,*" I understand that Christ calls Christian faith and Christian life, "*the strait gate*" and "*the narrow way,*" because they are both like exquisitely tempered metal, of a perfection so great and so subtle, that few hit upon it to understand it; whilst very few hit upon the expression of it.

And I understand, that because, after that man has hit upon the perfection of Christian faith and upon the perfection of Christian life, he finds the greatest satisfaction,

both in the one and in the other, even as Christ says in chapter xi., that His yoke is easy and His burden light. But of this I have spoken in a reply (to a question).

VII. 15-20.—Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. *Ye shall know them by their fruits*: Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? even so, every good tree bringeth forth good fruit: but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. *Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*

It clearly appears that this admonition which Christ gives His disciples did not serve at the time when He lived amongst them bodily, but that it does for the time when He lives with His disciples spiritually, for whom this counsel is at all times most necessary, because false prophets are ever grafting themselves amongst the true. And it should be understood that Christ here calls them false prophets, because He spoke during the time of the law; St. Paul calls them false apostles, because he spoke during the time of the Gospel. I understand these to be prophets and apostles, inasmuch as they preach Christ and teach Christian life, having learned both one and the other by scholarship; and I understand them to be false, for that they mix up Moses with Christ, and mix up the law with Christian life.

The sheep's clothing which they wear I understand to be the name of Christ and the Gospel which are frequently on their lips, external poverty, verbal humility, austerity of life, apparent contempt of the world, of its pomp and

of its riches. And I do not understand their being "*ravelling wolves*" to consist in plundering other people's property, but that just as wolves are a plague to sheep, because they carry them off and devour them, so these are the plague of Christ's sheep, for they separate them from Christ and lead them to Moses; they separate them from the Gospel and lead them to the law; as they had separated the Galatians, as appears from the epistle which St. Paul wrote to them. Christ tells us to beware of such wolves, to keep our eyes upon them, lest they pervert us.

And in saying "*by their fruits ye shall know them*," He means, that looking well on their works, we shall recognise them as false prophets and as false apostles. The works of a true prophet and apostle are humility of mind, modesty, meekness, sincerity, and truth, and the resolute mortification of all that is carnal and worldly; such an one preaches Christ purely, without mixing Him up with Moses; and teaches Christian life purely, without mixing it up with the law; for he has Christ, the Gospel, and Christian life in his heart; and he can only give of what he has; and it should be understood that Christian faith has wrought this effect upon him.

The works of a false prophet and apostle are self-esteem, whilst he is scandalous, turbulent, contentious, false, malignant, and mendacious: such an one preaches more of Moses than of Christ, although he names Christ more than Moses; and he teaches more law than Gospel, because he has more of Moses than of Christ, and more of the law than of the Gospel; and he can only give of what he has. And therefore most appositely does Christ compare false prophets to a bad tree, comparing true prophets and apostles to a good tree. *Nay, it is so, that every man, however high his moral virtue may be, if he is without Christ, is a bad tree; and being a bad tree must necessarily produce bad fruit; for the heart, whence the fruit comes, is bad; just as every one, however weak and infirm he may be, if he is incorporated into Christ, is a good*

tree; and being a good tree must necessarily produce good fruit; for the heart, whence the fruit comes, is good, having been renewed by the Holy Spirit.

And therefore St. James said well, *Show me thy faith by thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works;*" meaning, that it profits nothing for me to say that I believe, if I do not show that I believe, by my living mortified and even dead to the world; because it is a fact that mortification is the effect of faith, as are also humility and charity; for he that believes is humble and charitable.

Christ, in saying, "*by their fruits ye shall know them,*" gives us, who are His, license to judge of the falsehood and of the truth of them, who are not prophets and apostles, by what we shall see of their outward lives; so that when we see that their life is ambitious, scandalous, and contentious, we, holding them to be false and lying prophets, should flee from them; and, when we see that it is humble, modest, and pure, we, holding them to be true prophets, unite ourselves to them. For which judgment we must ever ask God to give us more and more of His Holy Spirit, holding it to be certain that without Him, we shall never know how to form it.

VII. 21-27.—Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father, who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and

the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house: and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock. And every one who heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.

Christ, having largely instructed His disciples in the obligation of Christian regeneration, which is peculiarly theirs, who are in the kingdom of heaven, through their acceptance of the grace of the Gospel, goes on to conclude His instructions by saying, "*Not every one that saith unto Me,*" &c., meaning, that to take possession of the kingdom of heaven in the present life, so that we may continue it in the life eternal, we must, when accepting the grace of the Gospel by which we call Christ Lord, apply ourselves to live Christianly, by the obligation of Christian regeneration, as He teaches us it in these three chapters, confirming our faith by our Christian life, and showing that we have faith by our works.

And as to the man, who thinks to save himself, living as they are wont to do, who live in the kingdom of the world, saying that he has faith, Christ compares him to one who builds his house upon the sand; for that such an one's faith, not being confirmed by the experience of Christian life, being assailed, falls; whilst the man, who lives Christianly, in nonconformity to everything worldly, confirms his Christian faith by his Christian life, and is compared by Christ to the man who builds his house upon the rock, for that such an one's faith, being thus confirmed, although it be assailed, does not fall.

Whence it is to be understood that Christ's design is to persuade us all, who accept His Gospel, to apply ourselves to live as He has taught in this argument; aiming by our

Christian life to show and give evidence of our Christian faith, and to uphold ourselves in it, to defend and to maintain possession of the kingdom of heaven, into which we enter by believing. And it is to be understood that the faith, which does not lead a man to make up his mind to live thus, and that does not bring him to do so, or at least to wish to do so, to desire it, and to strive to come up to it, is neither inspired nor revealed, but taught and historic.

I state this, that it may be understood, that the Christian life of those who live Christianly is the effect of Christian faith, and not of their human industry, that no man may glory in the presence of God. Thus do I understand all these words of Christ. And I understand, moreover, that because there were many, who followed Christ through curiosity, and others, who, in following Him, never applied themselves to live according to what He taught them; and because Christ knew that there would always be many others in the world like these, He, seeking to undeceive them both, in order, that either they might apply, and may apply themselves, to live as He taught and teaches them ; or that they might separate, and may separate, themselves from Him ; and that they might and may leave Him ; and that they might neither give nor may give Him an evil name by their profane and worldly living, He says, '*Not every one that saith to Me,*' &c., meaning : that to enter into the kingdom, it does not suffice that ye walk after Me, that ye call yourselves Christians, and that ye call Me, Lord, for the principal thing required is that you do the will of God. And Christ means that the will of God is, that we apply ourselves to live as He has here taught us ; and that we shall not apply ourselves, unless we first receive the grace of the Gospel, which mightily constrains us to resolve as against the world and ourselves, and thus to apply ourselves and bring ourselves to live in a Christian-like manner.

They, who do not accept the Gospel, cannot possibly live Christianly ; whilst they, who do accept it, if they retain the acceptance in their minds, to them it will be impos-

sible but that they should by degrees come to live Christianly, following the obligation of Christian regeneration. Christ, desiring to confirm this very thing, says, "*Many will say to Me in that day,*" &c., meaning, that at the day of judgment there will be many, who, persuaded by false prophets and apostles, shall have believed themselves to be in possession of the kingdom of heaven, because they called themselves Christians, and because they called Christ Lord, and went through Christian ceremonies, and wrought miracles in the name of Christ; not having Christian faith, from which springs Christian life; and that He will tell them all to depart from Him, for that He does not know them, and that they are workers of iniquity: and such are all, who are without Christ, however holy they may appear in the eyes of the world; and they are all without Christ, who doubt of justification through Christ, and who, because they doubt, do not apply themselves to Christian life.

I understand that clause, "*Have we not prophesied in Thy name?*" to concern false prophets and apostles, who preach Christ with Moses, and the Gospel with the law, living like heathen or like Jews. I understand that clause, "*and have we not in Thy name cast out devils?*" together with that which follows it, to affect those, who, to work exorcisms, incantations, and enchantments, availed themselves of Christ's name and of God's name, persuading themselves that they work it by virtue of Christ, and of God, whilst in fact they work by diabolic agency. I will not contend with him, who shall say that there may be a faith to work miracles, in Christ's name, where there is not faith in justification through Christ, which is the foundation of Christian life. It is, indeed, true that I cannot persuade myself that it is so, because what St. Paul states (1 Cor. xiii. 2), I understand as I there have expounded it.

After that I had written this, recollecting that Christ's disciples had the gift of working miracles, and wrought

them, before they could understand the mystery of the Gospel, of the death of Christ, and of the resurrection of Christ, although indeed they knew that Christ was the Messiah, I understand that the gift of working miracles may be in men, who may not have received the grace of the Gospel comprehending it. In which apprehension I am confirmed the more, remembering that Judas was comprised in the number of the twelve, and that he likewise officially wrought miracles in the name of Christ.

In the comparison of those who build, it is to be understood that in saying, "*and doeth them*," He means: and applies himself to do them and to carry them out, not contenting himself with saying: what He says is right; and I understand that this application cannot be, excepting where there is Christian faith; for it is a fact that he, who is not assured by Christian faith of his welfare in the life eternal, can never wholly divest himself of affection for the present life and its interests, and whilst he does not divest himself of this affection, he cannot apply himself to the doctrine of Christ.

The rain, the floods, and the winds that beat upon the house erected, I mean to say upon the Christian faith, I understand them to be *the persecutions of men of the world, the false persuasions of hellish demons, and the assaults of personal sensuality*. I understand that these beat upon Christian faith, and I understand that when they find it confirmed by the experience of Christian life, it stands sound, firm, and stable; just as when they find it founded upon opinion and without experience of Christian life, they beat it to the earth, and its fall is so much the greater, as the Christian profession is greater. And, therefore, it is necessary that man establish his Christian faith by the experience of Christian life, as I remember to have written in a Consideration [cii.]

St. Matthew, in what he has written up to this point, has set forth the greater part of Christ's teaching, respecting which it is right and very necessary that the Chris-

tian hit the perfection spoken of above as illustrated in the tempering of metals, ever remembering that he must practise the greatest violence upon himself, resolving as against the world and himself, in the manner we have above stated, and thus constrain himself to conform his life, as far as it shall be possible to him, to this doctrine; and knowing that when any one shall fail in it, he is not to hold himself as alienated from Christ, nay he has to recognise the benefit of Christ, considering that had Christ not satisfied and paid for him, he would be judged and condemned by the judgment of God with all that rigour wherewith they will be judged and condemned, who shall not have accepted the general pardon, through Christ, which is intimated to them in the Gospel; by which acceptance we come to Christian life, and although we fail somewhat in it, we are not judged with this severity.

VII. 28, 29.—And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

St. Matthew, having recorded this most divine argument of Christ, describes the effect which it wrought on the minds of those that heard Him; saying that they were surprised, that they were astonished; and stating the cause whence the surprise sprang, he says, "*for He taught,*" &c.; meaning, that they were not so much surprised at what He said, as at the majesty and authority with which He said it, as Lord and Master of what He said, and not as servant and subject to it, as were the scribes.

Here I understand that the difference, which there was between Christ and the scribes, exists likewise between those, who, having the Spirit of Christ, teach by experience, they also being Lords and Masters of what they say; and those, who, holding Christianity by opinion, teach by scholarship, not being masters of what they say.

This difference they will have experienced in themselves, who, having in their time taught from books, have come to teach by experience, to teach with the spirit and not with the letter; and they likewise experience it, who, having heard what the scribes teach by learning, hear Christians, who teach by experience; teaching that which they personally experience within themselves.

This consideration here presents itself to me, which truly excites in me the greatest wonder: that ten words of St. Peter, after the coming of the Holy Spirit, were of greater power to convert men, than were all those which Christ has here spoken. By which consideration I learn three things. The *first*, how incapable we men are of divine things, however much we may hear them discussed, whilst the Holy Spirit does not inwardly move us. The *second*, how much more generous is God with men, since He has chastised all our sins in Christ, than He was before that He had chastised them. And the *third*, that Christ's peculiar office in the world was, not to convert men, but to die for them, taking the sins of them all upon Himself. And by how much the more I consider this, so much the more am I assured of this truth, that God, having chastised my sins in Christ, will never chastise me for them; and I know this assurance works in me this most singular effect, that it mortifies my desires to sin, and brings me to such a state, that I could wish to be deprived of all bodily and outward pleasure, in order to be wholly absorbed in the consideration of this most singular benefit of Christ, which affectionately attaches me to God and to Christ, in the highest degree.

Here, this makes me marvel, that St. Matthew, having stated at the beginning of the fifth chapter, that Christ began to converse with His disciples, and having continuously sustained this argument, that he should here say *the people* were astonished, from which it appears that they heard it, for they were astonished; but as to this, I remit myself to those who understand it, willingly confessing my ignorance.

## CHAPTER VIII.

VIII. 1-4.—When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

These things worthy of consideration present themselves in these words: *First*, that [declaration] he worshipped Him, where the evangelist means that the leper performed in relation to Christ, the ceremony which is performed in the temple to God, which was that of prostrating himself upon the earth in token of obedience and submission. *Second*: the faith that the leper had in Christ, which he manifested by saying: “*if Thou wilt, Thou canst.*” *Third*: the ease with which Christ healed him, confirming in him, by the deed wrought, the opinion which he had formed of Him. *Fourth*: that Christ commands the leper that he should tell no one that He had healed him: where I think that He commanded him to do so, not in order that he should not tell it, but that he should be the more moved by the prohibition to tell it, in order that the number of those who should praise God, might be greater. *Fifth*: that Christ, in sending

the leper to the priest, taught in practice, that which He had in the fifth chapter taught verbally, as to not breaking the least commandment of the law, which, as is said, had to be kept in all and everything until the coming of the Holy Spirit. He, who would wish to understand how this ritual, in relation to lepers, was ministered in the time of the law, will read it in Leviticus xiv., where he will learn it. That, "*as a testimony unto them*," means, unto lepers cleansed from leprosy.

VIII. 5-13.—And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so

be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

That which is principally worthy of consideration in this miracle is that the centurion, having the faith in Christ which he had, of which Christ Himself says, "*Verily, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel,*" held himself to be so vile and so bad, that he judged himself to be unworthy that Christ should enter his house; whilst, indeed, this man was so transcendent in faith, and so excellent in manifested goodness, that he might have held himself to be just and holy, and he might have held Christ to be unworthy to enter his house.

Where it is well seen, how different are the effects that faith produces, from those, which works without faith produce; since it is so that faith combined with works humiliates, whilst works without faith inflate with vanity. The cause of these effects being so contrary is this, that man does not recognise any peculiar virtue in faith, and thus he does not become vain, but by it and with it, he, recognising his own peculiar defects, humbles himself; whilst in works without faith, man recognising his own peculiar virtue, which knowledge blinds him, not allowing him to see his defects, he cannot humble himself; on the contrary, he becomes vain. We have the experience of this in the scribes and Pharisees, and in all who are saints of the world.

Indeed it is a fact, that just as faith without works is but a faith of opinion, and, more than that, dangerous, so works without faith are not works of charity, but of carnality, and, more than that, most dangerous. Faith is the foundation of all good. And I call faith that which gives credit to the promises of God, and which holding God to be faithful and mighty, rests mentally assured, with relation to the individual, that God will fulfil to him all He promises; and particularly does he hold himself to be reconciled to God through Christ, not being terrified

by any wickedness however great he may recognise in himself. And I call those 'works of faith' that give evidence of faith, that are incompatible with feigning; such are meekness, humility, Christian obedience and charity; which things do not exist save where there is Christian faith.

I understand that Christ founded what He said of the centurion, "*I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel,*" upon the words of the centurion himself; in which he showed that he had a higher opinion of Christ than the leper, who had said, "*if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean;*" and even than the disciples who followed Christ, having left everything, knowing Him to be more than man, and superior to all created things. And it is thus that in saying, "*for I also am a man,*" &c., it appears that he meant to say: I am a man subject to men, and am obeyed, at my word, by those who are subject to me; how much more then art Thou, who, being more than man, art not subject to men, to be obeyed at Thy word by the creatures, who are subject to Thee? Whence it appears, that the centurion recognised divinity in Christ, and from that he gathered that Christ had greater power over diseases and all other created things than he had over his soldiers and his servants.

Christ took occasion from the incident with the centurion to speak of the conversion of the Gentiles to the grace of the Gospel, and thus He says, "*I say unto you, that many shall come,*" &c., whence I understand that they, who accept the Gospel, being children of Abraham, enter into the kingdom of heaven, and as far as it is possible, sit down with Abraham, in this present life, and that they will sit down more fully and perfectly in the life eternal. Christ calls the Jews "*the children of the kingdom,*" because it appears that the kingdom of heaven belonged to Abraham and to his seed; and to them, as children of Abraham after the flesh, the inheritance of the world had been promised. These, Christ says, shall be

cast out into outer darkness, meaning into that which is furthest from the light, where I understand that just as we, who accept the Gospel, enter into possession of the light of the kingdom of God, in the present life, where we joy and rejoice through peace in our consciences; so they, who do not accept it, enter, in the present life, into possession of darkness, of the kingdom of Satan, where they weep and tremble through disquietude of their consciences: we begin to taste the happiness of the kingdom of God, and they began to taste the wretchedness of the kingdom of Satan.

Christ, in saying to the centurion, "*Go thy way, and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee,*" greatly tends, in the highest degree He does so, to confirm the faith of those who believe; we gain assurance that God will act towards us according to our faith, and thus we are encouraged to stand sound, firm, and constant in it; and to ask of God that He increase it in us; confident that we shall through it, obtain of God all that we shall wish.

Whether another man's faith suffices to attain the inner salvation of the soul, which was, as it appears in this instance, sufficient to attain the outer salvation of the body, I leave to the examination of those who know it.

Where He says "*servant*," the Greek word *παῖς* also signifies son, and I should have translated it son, but that St. Luke, in narrating this miracle, uses another word, *δούλος*, which can only signify servant, boy, or slave. In saying, "*from the east and from the west*," He means from all parts of the world indifferently.

VIII. 14, 15.—And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever: and he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.

Hence we learn clearly that St. Peter was married:

whether he left his wife, or not, to preach the Gospel does not appear: it is indeed true, that from what St. Paul says (1 Cor. ix. 5), it appears that he took his wife with him wherever he went to preach. From what he says, that St. Peter's mother-in-law, having been cured, ministered unto Christ and His disciples, it is to be inferred that Christ observed a certain mediocrity in His style of life, without pomp and without austerity. The reason why He neither came with pomp nor with austerity, I have written in a Consideration (lxxxix.), nay, I have set down six reasons, just as I at that time apprehended them.

VIII. 16, 17.—When the evening was come, they brought to him many that were possessed with devils, and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

St. Matthew shows the power of Christ, by saying that He with a word cast evil spirits out of human bodies. As to Isaiah's words, I remit myself to what they say, who understand how they harmonise with the point in question.

VIII. 18-22.—Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side. And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And another of his disciples said unto

him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

In the book-learned scribe and theologian, I contemplate men of the world, who, seeing nothing in Christ but what is prized and esteemed by the world, with little or no reflection, resolve to follow Christ; but when they see in Christ abjectness, poverty, and humility, which are despised by the world, they give up their resolution. I understand that Christ rejects these, by showing them what there is in Himself, that is despised by the world, for He will not have in His followers men, who cherish human purposes and designs of covetousness, of ambition, or of curiosity.

In the disciple I contemplate the children of God, predestinated to life eternal, whom Christ constrains to follow Him, causing them to desist from the fulfilment of the obligation of human generation, [of birth], to fulfil the obligation of Christian regeneration. The obligation of human generation led this disciple to bury his father; and Christ did not permit him to do so—telling him that he should follow Him, in doing which he fulfilled the obligation of Christian regeneration. Christ, in saying, "*let the dead bury their dead*," means, fulfil thou the obligation of Christian regeneration, and leave to the unregenerate to fulfil the obligation of human generation. Here the law might cry out against Christ, saying that He counselled this man to disobey the fourth [the fifth] commandment of the decalogue; where I understand, that the Pharisees did not on this account cry out against Christ, because it did not affect ceremonies, in the observance of which they were most superstitious, as are all men, who, devoid of the Holy Spirit, pretend to religion.

I understand it to be of the greatest consolation to persons called of God to follow Christ, to consider the case of this disciple, because they rest assured, that Christ in act-

ing with them as He did with him, will not allow them to depart from Him, not even when they shall be provoked by the obligation of human generation, in which piety of a certain kind is involved.

That expression, "*the birds of the heaven*," is a Hebraism, which calls the region of the air, heaven. Likewise that expression, "*the Son of man*," is a Hebraism, which calls men vile, abject, and plebeian, the children of man, or of Adam, and is practically the same as though He had called them men, in order that they might recognise their abjectness and vileness in being formed of earth.

Where it has to be observed that Christ's humility is not to be contemplated in the poverty and abjectness in which He was born, but in that He was man, in which He would have humiliated Himself, even though He had been born emperor of the whole world, even as I have written upon Philip. ii. Ezechiel, in his scripture, is wont to call himself Son of Man. Here I will add this, that, according to human judgment, it had been reasonable had Christ admitted the scribe, who offered himself, to His society, and that He should have rejected the disciple, who made excuses; whilst Christ did just the opposite. Where we may understand two things: *the one*, that Christ knew the hearts of men, their designs and their intentions—of which knowledge, an infinitesimal portion is communicated to those, who have the Spirit of Christ; and *the other*, that it is the greatest temerity to desire to judge the works of God, of the Son of God, and even of those who are the children of God, unless it is with the same Spirit of God, with which they are wrought, conformably with St. Paul's statement (1 Cor. xi. 15), that the spiritual judges everything, being himself judged of no one.

VIII. 23-27.—And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. And, behold,

there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves : but he was asleep. And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us : we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith ? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea ; and there was a great calm. But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him ?

I understand that what occurred to these disciples of Christ, occurs frequently to every one of us, who are His disciples ; for that, just as the faith of these disciples was exercised by the tempest on the lake, in order that they, knowing themselves to be unbelieving and wanting in faith, should humble themselves ; and desiring to have much faith, should pray for it : so likewise the faith of every one of us is exercised by divers tribulations and temptations, in order that, we, knowing ourselves to be unbelieving and wanting in faith, may humble ourselves ; and desiring to have much faith, may pray to God for it. These disciples had faith, for had they not had it, they would not have followed Christ, neither would they have gone to ask Him to deliver them from danger, but their faith was weak and tottering ; for had it been strong and firm, they would have been sure that they could not perish, Christ being on board the boat with them, and thus they would not have gone to awaken Christ, neither would He have rebuked them with those words, "*Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith ?*" Whence it is readily inferred, that fear is an indication of little faith ; and if the fear of these disciples of Christ, who had no particular promise whereon to found their faith, was an indication of little faith, how much greater an indication of little faith will the fear of every one of us be, who indeed are not

in the same boat with Christ, but who are incorporated into Christ and have the great promises of God.

Let this then be the conclusion: he that fears, doubts: and he that doubts, has little faith; for had he had much faith, he would not have doubted. And it does not avail to say: I do not fear upon the part of God, but I do fear for my part; for what faith requires of me is, that I rest assured upon the part of God and upon my own part, basing my security not in myself, but in God and in Christ. Here I will add this, that it is the greatest consolation for us, who being disciples of Christ, are weak in faith, to consider that Christ did not reject these His disciples on account of the weakness of their faith; nay that He saved and delivered them, as though they had been strong in faith, because they knew themselves to be weak in faith.

It was a great demonstration of Christ's divinity that He was thus obeyed by the winds and the waves.

VIII. 28-34.—And when he was come to the other side, into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? And there was a good way off from them a herd of many swine feeding. So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told everything, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils. And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus ; and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts.

We learn many things in this story. *First*, that demoniacs dwelt in the tombs, or great sepulchres, outside the city. *Second*, that demoniacs injured the public, since St. Matthew says, that those were so terrible that no one could pass that way. *Third*, that there is no convention between Christ and the devil, since they themselves said to Him, *What have we to do with Thee ?*

*Fourth*, that the demons knew Christ to be the Son of God. Where I understand two things: *the one*, that this knowledge is not to be called faith; *for there is no faith, but where there is a promise*. The demons were promised nothing good by Christ; and, therefore, although they knew that Christ was the Son of God, they had no faith, they did not believe they should have aught good through Christ. And *the other*, that they have not Christian faith, who know Christ to be the Son of God, and believe that He has reconciled men with God; unless they surely and firmly hold that they are comprehended in this reconciliation; and thus hold themselves to be friends of God, and are sure of their resurrection and of their glorification.

*Fifth*, that a time is coming when demons have to be tormented by Christ. I understand that this will commence at the day of judgment; and then I understand that what God said, when He cursed the serpent, who deceived Eve, saying, "*she shall bruise thy head*," shall be fulfilled. This is to be understood as involved in that expression, "*before the time*."

*Sixth*, that demons have no power to injure, not even

the brutes, unless God consent to their doing it ; a cause of great satisfaction to Christians, for being assured that the devil cannot injure them without the will of God, they are sure that although he should assail them, in order to separate them from God, he will not ruin them.

*Seventh*, that the devils hold it to be their province to do injury, in any way they can ; and that being unable to injure men, they go and injure hogs.

*Eighth*, that Christ cares but little about damage done to property, since He did not care about the loss incurred by the owners of the swine ; and here I learn whence it proceeds, that persons, who have the spirit of Christ, attach no value to outward things, beyond their use in bodily sustenance. I also think that Christ permitted the incident of the hogs, that the miracle might be more evident, and thus cause greater wonder.

*Ninth*, that just as the company of God, of Christ, and of those who belong to God and to Christ, is sweet and grateful to those who love God and Christ, so is it dreaded and feared by men estranged from God and from Christ. And no wonder, since, from experience, it has been seen that many ungodly men have perished by associating with the servants of God. Abimelech's is a case in point. He suffered injury by associating with Abraham (Gen. xx.) Egypt will testify to the truth of this, how severely was it chastised on account of the Jewish nation (Exod. vii. 14). Those kings, who were ejected from the land of promise will bear testimony to this (the narrative is found in the Book of Joshua) ; and Jerusalem, that was destroyed by way of chastisement for Christ's death, will testify to this. And thus it is no marvel, that these Gergesenes besought Christ, that He should depart out of their coasts, fearing that through His company some evil would come upon them ; as, in point of fact, evil almost ever befalls the servants of the world from association with the servants of God—not from defect of those, who are God's; but by the malice

and malignity of those who belong to the world, who exercising their ungodliness against the servants and children of God, provoke the anger of God against themselves, and are thus so treated, that it had been better for them never to have known them. Therefore it would be good and sound counsel for the children of the world not to embarrass themselves with the children of God, but to do as these Gergesenes did with Christ—entreating them to depart from them; but not constraining, or forcing them, to do so, as did these with Christ.

*Tenth.* It is to be understood here, that it behoves the children of God not to contend with nor set themselves in opposition to those, who do not desire their society, but to depart peacefully from them, as did Christ from these Gergesenes.

## CHAPTER IX.

IX. 1-8.—And he entered into a boat, and passed over, and came into his own city. And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus, seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house. But when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.

St. Matthew shows Christ's principal aim in curing this paralytic, by recording the effect which resulted from the cure; this being, that the multitudes glorified God, who had given such power to Christ. From this occurrence we learn this:

*First*, That God is wont to do good to some, to promote faith in others. Although one might state that in saying "*their faith*," that of the paralytic was also comprehended.

*Second*, That if, indeed, love were blended with faith, in those who carried the paralytic, the evangelist states that Christ had regard to their faith, as the root whence the love proceeded; for it is certain that if they had not believed that Christ could heal the paralytic, and that He would heal him, they would not have wrought that work of love in carrying him to Christ.

*Third*, We here learn that Christ had authority to pardon sins, even before they had been chastised in Himself; and, if before, how much more afterwards?

*Fourth*, We see in this case what occurs to many, who go to hold a conversation with a Christian, and get from him what they never purposed nor thought of: and this is what occurs to all, who are the children of God, that they get from God, more than their imagination ever grasped.

*Fifth*, We learn as to men destitute of the Spirit, that the more learned they are, so much the more rash are they in judging; as was the case with these scribes, men of letters or theologians, who, hearing Christ say, "*thy sins are forgiven thee*," immediately condemned Christ in their minds, as a blasphemer against God; for that He, according to them, usurped to Himself, that which belonged only to God; in that, sins are offences done against God, and that it is for the offended to pardon.

*Sixth*, We learn that Christ knew the minds and hearts of men, though indeed we have already seen this. "*Why think ye evil in your hearts?*" is tantamount to, why have ye evil thoughts? I think that Christ constituted the greater facility in saying, "*thy sins are forgiven thee*," than in saying, "*take up thy bed and walk;*" in this, that the effect of the one could be seen, whilst that of the other could not. It involves beyond all comparison a greater result to forgive sins, than to cure a paralytic; but the evidence of the cure of the paralytic is likewise greater than that of the forgiveness of sins; and therefore Christ, desiring to assure the scribes of the remission of sins, which was the greater result, cured the paralytic,

which was more evident; so that the paralytic got inner soundness by his faith and that of those, who carried him to Christ; and he got outer soundness by the murmurs of the scribes.

And the *seventh* thing, that we learn here, is, assurance of what St. Paul says (Rom. viii. 28), "*That to those, who love God, all things work together for good.*" We have yet to consider that expression, "*take up thy bed.*" Before that Christ had cured him, he was brought upon a bed; and after that he had been cured, he carried the bed upon his shoulders; which fact rendered the miracle more brilliant; and then it well issued in what St. Matthew states, that the multitudes who witnessed it, marvelled and glorified God.

IX. 9-13.—And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him. And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

In the call of St. Matthew we learn that there is no man so bad, who, considering his sins, need think that the kingdom of heaven is shut against him. "*The receipt of custom*" was the toll-house, where they sat, who collected

the toll, an excise duty or poll-tax; they who filled this office were held to be infamous, and were called publicans; an epithet expressive of something worse than sinners. In Castile [of which our author was a native] there was a period in which this office was held to be so infamous, that scarcely any, save Jews, discharged it.

Considering Christ seated at table in the publican's house with publicans and sinners; the goodness and mercy of God present themselves before me, which attracted those, who enjoyed Christ's company, whom the Gergesenes had expelled from their coasts, scared and terrified by the miracle; and the humility and meekness of Christ, who, being righteousness and purity itself, did not feel ashamed to be seated amongst such people.

Considering the scandal of the Pharisees, brings before me the extreme difference that there is between the saints of the world, and the saints of God. The saints of the world, founding their sanctity upon the opinion which the world entertains of them, flee the society and intercourse of men who bear an evil name and bad reputation; whilst the saints of God, founding their sanctity upon the opinion which God holds of them, only avoid the society and intercourse which would profane their minds and corrupt their morals; caring nothing for the opinion which the world may form of them. The saints of the world, aiming at worldly glory, apply themselves to serve God and to serve their neighbour, by things that make external show; they make sacrifices to, and assist, their neighbour, with corporeal benefits: whilst the saints of God, aiming at the glory of God, apply themselves to serve God and to serve their neighbour, by inward things, "*in holiness and righteousness*" (Luke i. 75), and by the Gospel of Christ. The saints of the world are scandalised by those who are not like themselves, whilst the saints of God grieve for and compassionate those who are not the saints of God.

In St. Mark ii. 15, we learn that the house where

Christ was seated at meat, was St. Matthew's own; Christ took him away from the toll-house with Himself, and then went to visit him in his own house.

Christ, in saying, "*that the whole need not a physician,*" expressed the opinion which the Pharisees had of themselves; as though He should say, You hold yourselves to be sound, whilst these hold themselves to be sick; and therefore it concerns me, who am a physician, to converse and treat with these, and not with you; and when Christ adds, "*but go ye and learn,*" &c., He expressed the opinion which He had of them; showing them that by the very fact, that they murmured against Him, they proved that they did not understand what Hosea (vi. 6) says, "*I will have mercy and not sacrifice;*" since it appeared to them to be wrong that He should exercise Himself in piety, in being with those publicans and sinners; bringing them to repentance; that they should cease to be publicans and sinners; and that they should become holy and righteous; in doing which, that mercy is exercised which pleased God, much more, during the time of the law, than the sacrifices of animals, which were made by order of God Himself; and if this was so in the time of the law, how much more shall it be so in the time of the Gospel?

In the Hebrew, the word, which we here translate mercy, signifies likewise piety, religion, and holiness: and it is well to know that the prophet having said, "*mercy,*" piety, religion, or holiness, "*are what I will have, and not sacrifice,*" adds, "*and the knowledge of God, rather than holocausts,*" where I understand the same meaning to be repeated with increased force, for the knowledge of God is the same, but a little more than mercy; just as a holocaust is the same, but a little more than a sacrifice; and it is so, that there can be no mercy, piety, or holiness, where there is no knowledge of God; for these things are the effect of the knowledge of God; and it likewise is so, that neither the sacrifices nor the holocausts of men, who

are unacquainted with God, who want the true knowledge of God, can please God, for they are without mercy, without piety, and without holiness.

Those words of Christ, "*for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance,*" are terrible as against the saints of the world, who hold themselves to be righteous before God, because they are righteous before the world; because they do nothing for which men of the world can condemn them. They do not consider how very wide is the difference between the judgment of God and the judgment of man. Christ says that He did not come to call such, because, they holding themselves to be righteous, never do embrace the righteousness of Christ. And He says that He came to call sinners to repentance, in order that they, recognising their unrighteousness, may remit themselves to the righteousness of God; and that thus, ceasing to be sinners, they may be righteous, not in their own estimation, but in the estimation of God, who considers them, not by that which they are in themselves, but by that which they are in Christ.

It seems to me to be the right thing here to counsel every Christian, that, on the one hand, he strive so to live amongst men of the world, that with open face he may be enabled to say with Christ, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" (John viii. 46); whilst, on the other hand, he may keep himself as from fire, from the thought of pretending upon this account to be just before God; nor even to be esteemed just or perfect in the opinion of men, and much less so of those, who have to be edified and benefited by his teaching and conversation: stopping his ears to the suggestions of human prudence, when it suggests that it is well to hide his defects that he may not lose credit with those whom he teaches, for under this zeal there is venom. The human mind is most arrogant, and however much it be humiliated, it needs to be still more humbled, and there is nothing that more humiliates us than to see that others know our defects; and there-

fore saints have not been ashamed to publish theirs, as did St. Paul, who published [the fact] that he was tempted by carnal appetite, after that he had been caught up into the third heaven.

IX. 14-17.—Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not ? And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them ? but the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast. No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up, taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles, else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish : but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

Scarcely had Christ replied to the calumny, when He is assailed by the doubt which irritated St. John the Baptist's disciples, who, when they saw the liberty with which Christ's disciples lived, free from those ceremonious fasts with which they saw the Pharisees burdened, they, marvelling that Christ should leave His disciples that liberty, asked Him the reason of it; with no malignant spirit like that of the Pharisees, but with a simple and honest spirit; and hence Christ does not answer them as He did the Pharisees, but gives them the explanation of that which they asked Him.

Whence we understand that it behoves Christians (who ordinarily are either calumniated by saints of the world, or fall under suspicion of those, who, beginning to be saints of God, still retain the bad habits of saints of the world),

to counteract saints of the world with Holy Scripture; and to give a reason for themselves to imperfect saints of God, to those, who do not come with malice but with sincerity.

As to fasting, it has been already stated that a Jewish fast was an affliction that lasted throughout a day, as appears from Joel ii. 13, and as appears also here from what Christ says: "*They cannot mourn*," as though mourning and fasting were the same. As to Christ's answer, he who shall combine it with what St. John the Evangelist reports of the Baptist's statement, "*He that hath the bride is the bridegroom*," will judge that it was most appropriate, that Christ, in speaking with the disciples of St. John, should call Himself the Bridegroom, since St. John himself had done so. Christ is the Bridegroom, for He has the Bride, who is the Church, which He has purchased with His blood; washing it and cleansing it in His blood, with it and by it; implanting the faith in it by which it believes that it is Christ's spouse, cleansed and washed with the blood of Christ, who took upon Himself all His bride's pollution, and by dying upon the cross delivered her from it; and thus the bride remained clean and the Bridegroom most clean. We who believe, are the children of this marriage, and by believing, enjoy the purity of Christ's spouse, being ourselves the spouse. These cannot fast, nor mourn, nor weep, nor be sad, whilst Christ is with them, and they are with Christ; but when Christ has left them, then indeed they fast, and in despite of themselves.

This was so to the letter with the disciples of Christ, who, whilst they had Christ's bodily presence, had nothing to cause them grief or sadness; as Christ Himself affirms, where He says in Luke xxii. 35, "*Lacked ye anything?*" But after that they lost Christ's bodily presence, there came upon them labours, sorrows, and griefs, caused by persecutions, which, although they wrought inward joy, did not fail to grieve and vex the flesh. This is realised by all who are disciples of Christ: whilst Christ is with

them, making them feel His presence, no grief of any kind can invade them : separated from Christ, not feeling Christ's presence, then they are sad, nay, no joy can move them. This also ever holds, whilst they who are disciples of Christ are with Christ and Christ is with them ; they never fast ceremoniously, nor do they attend to any other similar ceremonies ; but when, neglectful of Christ, Christ leaves them, then they begin to practise fasting and other ceremonies, even as I have set forth at length in a reply.

Christ, desiring to give St. John's disciples still further satisfaction, says, "*no man patches an old garment with new cloth ;*" as though He should say, and for the same reason that no man is in the habit of patching an old garment with new cloth, on account of the incidental damage ; for that the old cloth of the garment being unable to resist the strength of the patch of new cloth, it comes to pass that it tears, and thus the rent or hole in the garment becomes larger ; so it is not my habit to teach either the Pharisees, or those, who are not my disciples, that they should not fast, for the inconvenience that would follow ; for the new doctrine, which is peculiar to those, who are my disciples, being incompatible with the old habits of pretension to sanctity, it would come to pass that from being superstitious and ceremonious, they would become vicious and licentious.

Conforming myself with this, I have repeatedly stated that the doctrine of Christian and spiritual life is not to be propounded, save to those, who, having accepted the general indulgence and pardon proclaimed in the Gospel, begin to witness concerning themselves, and to evince that faith is efficacious in them, as it is in all those, who believe through inspiration and divine revelation. When He says, "*taketh from the garment,*" He means, that the new patch by dragging, draweth after itself that which took the seam of the old cloth.

Christ, not resting contented with what had been said, because He wished to send St. John's disciples away fully

satisfied, adds, "*neither do they put new wine in old skins.*" Whence I understand that we all, who are Christ's disciples, are new skins, for that we are regenerated and renewed by the Holy Spirit; and I understand that they are all old skins, who, being without this regeneration and renovation, pretend to godliness. I likewise understand that the doctrine of Christian and spiritual life is new wine, which began its existence in the world with Christ, whilst I understand that the doctrine of moral life and legal life is old wine. And thus Christ's meaning is, that He did not teach those, who were not His disciples, as His own disciples, because the teaching and the persons taught would be lost; and He concludes that just as new wine does well in new skins, so the teaching of Christian life, which is new, does well in persons regenerated and renewed by the Holy Spirit, who preserve the teaching and are preserved by the teaching. In saying, "*if otherwise,*" He means, and if it be not done thus, if it be done otherwise. The skins that held the wine served as leathern bottles.

IX. 18-26.—While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come, and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. And Jesus arose, and followed him, and so did his disciples. And, behold, a woman, who was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment: for she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made

whole from that hour. And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise, He said unto them, Give place : for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose. And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.

Everything connected with these two miracles teaches us the power of faith, which obtains from God as much as it needs to believe *that*, which it will obtain. The ruler believed, that if Christ touched the hand of his daughter, that she would be brought again to life ; and, when Christ touched the child's hand, she was brought again to life ; the woman, who had the issue of blood, which she had had so many years, believed, that if she touched the fringe or hem of Christ's garment, she would then be cured ; and when she touched the hem of Christ's garment, she then was cured.

Whence Christians will consider that since it came to pass that these obtained from Christ as much as they believed, that they should obtain even of those things that will be in a manner accessories to Christ's coming ; it will also come to pass that they will obtain from Christ and through Christ as much as they shall believe that they are to receive ; and so much the more as the purpose of Christ's coming was to give them that which they believe they are to receive through Christ, namely, immortality and eternal life, of which they have the amplest promises of God.

This ruler, as appears from St. Mark and from St. Luke, was prince, or lord of one of the synagogues of that land, where the Jews assembled. As to "worship," this was treated of in the former chapter. The case of this woman is reported more fully by the other evangelists. Those

words of Christ, “*be of good comfort, daughter*,” tend to confirm the woman’s faith: and Christ in saying, “*thy faith hath made thee whole*,” appears to have purposed to remove from the woman any thought she might have, that the touch of the hem of Christ’s garment had cured her; in order that she might be certain that it was not the touch which had cured her, but the faith with which she had touched; that she should attribute her being made whole, not to the touch, but to the faith with which she touched.

And here I understand that the Jewish saints, who justified themselves by performing that which the law commanded, did not attribute their justification to their works, but to the faith with which they believed themselves to be righteous in working, even as I have set this forth in a Consideration (xi.) That expression, “*the minstrels*,” reveals a custom of those times. That, “*and they laughed Him to scorn*,” occurs daily, for that they, who, although they confess another life with their lips, in which they do not believe with their hearts, always mock and laugh at those, who, incorporated into Christ, hold themselves to be dead and to be quickened in Him; and begin to live in the present life as quickened with the purity and sincerity, with which they have to live in the other life: whilst they, who mock and laugh at them, may rest assured that they mock and laugh at Christ; and they who are mocked and scorned may rest assured that they are members of Christ; and may know as certain that God holds them as dead, as quickened and as glorified in Christ, and through Christ.

IX. 27-31.—And when Jesus departed thence two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us. And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to

him : and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this ? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith, be it unto you. And their eyes were opened ; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it. But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country.

It is worthy of consideration in the case of these two blind men, that Christ, willing to cure them, does not ask them whether they had led good lives, nor whether they had wrought good works ; neither does He command them to do such ; He simply asks them whether they believe, if they have faith, and thus He gives them the soundness that corresponds with their faith. Whence I consider that just as the works, that faith wrought in these blind men, led them to follow after Christ, shouting and asking to be made sound ; so the works that faith operates in us, who, believing in Christ, aim at the attainment of immortality and eternal life through Christ, lead us to follow after Christ, shouting and asking of Him immortality and eternal life. And I include and involve in *the following after Christ*, imitation of Christ, and living as Christ lived. And I include and involve in the shouting, continuous prayer, which is so annexed to *following after Christ*, that they never part company. They, who pretend to attain immortality and eternal life by their works, never go crying out after Christ, and thus their life is unlike Christ's ; nor are their prayers Christian prayers, for they are not founded upon Christ.

Christ, in charging those men not to tell who had cured them, did not design that they should not tell, but that they should tell it the more, as I have stated in the preceding chapter upon the leper. Christ understood well the nature of us men, who are inclined to do that

which we are prohibited ; and therefore when He wished that a thing should be known, He said that it should not be told, and He succeeded in His purpose. It is indeed true that these men, in disobeying Christ, did not, as I understand, think of doing wrong ; nay, I understand that they thought to do well, when they manifested their gratitude for the benefit they received, by disregarding that which Christ commanded them : for they believed that it was through modesty, and not because He indeed felt displeased at its being told. And although this is a fact, yet seeing that, after all, these men did the opposite of what Christ commanded them, I do not know what they shall reply to this, who would fain that Christ should first heal the minds of those whose bodies He healed. In saying, "*spread abroad his fame*," it means, that they spread Christ's fame abroad, publicly notifying who He was.

IX. 32-34.—As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil. And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake : and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel. But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.

Three notable things are combined in this miracle : the *first*, that the man was delivered from the demon, that his tongue was unbound, and that he spoke : the *second*, the wonder that this fact wrought upon the multitudes ; and the *third*, the calumny of the Pharisees, saints of the world. These same three things ever combine, when God by His Holy Spirit takes a man out of the kingdom of the world, sets him free from the tyranny of the devil, and draws him into the kingdom of God, setting him at Christian liberty ; and it comes to pass that such an one has his tongue unbound, and he begins to talk of spiritual and divine things, which causes great wonder amongst

the people, who see what is going on ; and it moves the saints of the world to calumniate that work of God, and pretending piety, to persecute the man whom God has delivered ; declaring it not to have been the work of God, but of the devil. By that utterance "*it was never so seen in Israel,*" the majesty and authority with which Christ wrought these things is made very clear.

IX. 35-38.—And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few ; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

St. Matthew says that Christ did three things when He went about the cities and villages of Judea : one was to teach, and the second to preach, and the third was to perform works of benevolence. Where I understand that Christ preached the Gospel of the kingdom ; I mean to say, the good and cheering embassy of the near approach of the kingdom of heaven, which is the kingdom of God ; and this I understand to have commenced with the coming of the Holy Spirit, and that it will be openly manifested at Christ's second coming. I likewise understand that Christ taught them to live according to the obligation of the law, which was then in living energy ; and according to the obligation of the kingdom of heaven, which was expected. That clause, "*and when He saw the multitudes,*" does not seem to depend upon what precedes.

And the compassion which Christ here felt for men, all true members of Christ experience, when they look upon them thus deserted and going astray, as do sheep when they have no shepherd to fold and protect them.

Christ, in saying to His disciples "*the harvest is great,*" &c., calls them, the multitude ready for conversion, harvest-crops, whom He had compared to sheep, and effectively it is so, that they who pertain to the kingdom of heaven are sheep, who follow Christ as their shepherd; and they are harvest-crops, for that just as harvest-crops are stored away in the farmer's barns, so they are put in possession of the kingdom of God; an occupation they continue in the life eternal. Christ, in saying, "*Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest,*" &c., teaches us that God will be sought in prayer even in those things on which He has determined; and even in those things wherein His own glory is illustrated; and that it is our duty to ask Him for them. The labourers to gather in God's harvest, I understand to be those who are sent by God to preach the Gospel, and to teach Christian life; and for this reason He says, "*Pray that He may send.*" *Those who are not sent forth or sent by God to this end amongst men, though they preach the Gospel and teach Christian life, are not God's labourers.* And here I understand the reason why there being at this time also so plenteous a harvest, and there being apparently many labourers, since there are many preachers who have the Gospel and Christ upon their lips, why they gather in but little; the reason as I understand is because they are not God's workmen but man's; and therefore what God says by the prophet in Jeremiah (xxiii. 21) attaches to them: "*I have not sent those prophets, yet they ran.*"

## CHAPTER X.

X. 1-5.—And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sicknesses and all manner of disease. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphæus, and Lebbæus, whose surname was Thaddæus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

From Christ's having commiserated the multitudes, and from His seeing that the harvest was great, it appears that He was moved to send forth the Apostles as labourers, that they should preach. Whence I note Christ's majesty in two things: the one, in that it is He who sends the labourers into God's harvest, a thing that pertains to God only; and the other, in that He gives power to these labourers, whom He sends out, to work miracles, another thing which pertains to God only. We have read of many who have wrought miracles, but of Christ only do we read as having given power to work miracles.

Where I understand that what Christ did here bodily when upon earth, He does spiritually being in spirit upon earth. And it is thus that He spiritually sends labourers

into God's harvest, to whom He gives spiritual power to draw men, by their words, from the tyranny of the devil, who is a foul spirit, and to set them in Christian liberty, and to heal all inward sicknesses and diseases. Now they who work these evident results, are apostles of Christ and God's labourers; they who do not work them are neither one nor the other. He who would wish to understand the meanings of the Apostles' names, and why they were twelve in number, and why some were more prominent than others, may read them in other writings.

X. 5-8.—These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

From these words it is most evident that not everything which Christ said, and not even much of what He gave in command to His disciples, affects our time; since it is a fact, that if what He here says, "*go not into the way of the Gentiles*," &c., remained valid beyond the time in which He uttered them, it would not have been lawful for the Apostles to go and preach the Gospel to the Gentiles after the coming of the Holy Spirit. It is necessary to exercise great skill in reading the Gospels to see what things were spoken only for those days, and what for all time; and what were spoken to Christians, and what to those who were aliens to Christ; for he who shall go wrong in this will fall into great embarrassment. Since here again it is to be understood, that for the same reason that Christ willed during His lifetime that the law should be observed and kept in all and

everything, as we have seen in the fifth chapter; He also willed, that during His lifetime the Gospel should not be preached to either the Gentiles or the Samaritans, but only to the Jews; to whom it had been particularly promised.

Where it says, sent forth, the Greek word is that from which the appellation Apostles is derived. Where He says "*go not into the way of the Gentiles*," He means, go not to preach to the Gentiles; and where He says, "*enter not into any city of the Samaritans*," He means, go not to preach in any city of the Samaritans; who indeed were not, correctly speaking, either Gentiles or Jews. In saying, "*but go ye rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*," He means, but go and preach amongst the Jews; where I understand that Christ calls those Israelites lost sheep, who, being predestined to life eternal, were God's sheep, but went astray, seeking and striving to justify themselves by their works. Christ in commanding His disciples that when they preached, they should state that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, teaches us that when we shall be inspired to preach, we preach the kingdom of heaven, not stating that it is at hand, as did the Apostles by Christ's command, for the kingdom had not then come, for the Holy Spirit had not then come; but declaring that the kingdom of heaven is already come.

Here I understand that to preach the kingdom of heaven is nothing other than to preach the mode in which it pleases God to rule and govern not one sole nation, as He did before that Christ had reconciled men to God; nor by written law, as He did before that the law had been fulfilled in Christ and by Christ; but all the nations of the world, and by His Holy Spirit only; that they, who accept the grace of the Gospel, enter into the kingdom of heaven, freed from personal anxiety, renouncing the government of human prudence, and casting all their care upon God, they remit themselves to His rule and to His government.

And here I seem to feel that this kingdom of God is called the kingdom of heaven, because it is most divine and most perfect; just as we call things that are most perfect celestial and heavenly. So that the kingdom of heaven is the same as the celestial kingdom, most divine, most spiritual, and most perfect. Christ, having ordered His disciples as to what they should preach, gives them orders as to what works they should perform, saying, "*Heal the sick,*" &c. Where it is to be borne in mind what the works are which pertain to the preacher of the Gospel, and which he does not himself perform, but the Spirit of God in him. And I hold it to be certain that this working by the Holy Spirit is annexed to the gifts of the apostolate, either conjointly upon body and mind, as was the case in the primitive Church, or only upon the mind, as it has been and is from that time to the present.

That, "*freely ye have received, freely give,*" tends to divest the minds of the Apostles from avarice, which, possibly deceived by human prudence, might persuade them that it was right to take from the rich, whom they restored to health, in order to give to the poor, a thing that might give an evil name to the Gospel. Christ, designing to remedy this, says, Since you have received this gift of working these miracles from God freely, and of His grace, communicate it freely and graciously to those with whom you shall communicate, accepting no recompense for it. Where it is not to be understood that Christ prohibits from taking of those, who have accepted the Gospel, in order to give to them, who suffer want; they also being of those who have accepted the Gospel, as it appears that St. Paul did; but let him not take it by way of recompense for service rendered; neither let him take, that which is given, for himself.

X. 9-11.—Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for

the workman is worthy of his meat. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy ; and there abide till ye go thence.

For that in proportion as the mind of man is the more free from care of things material and outward, so much the better can he attend to things spiritual and inward ; and in proportion as he the better knows by personal experience, that disregarding self and casting all his care upon God, God does not leave him to suffer want, so much the more does He confide in God, learning by these material things, what he may anticipate from God in spiritual things. Christ willed that those whom He sent to preach His Gospel should look solely to Him, disengaging themselves from worldly things, and that they should learn from personal experience what they might anticipate from Him ; He ordered them to take nothing with them that might obstruct them, in order that they should be free and disengaged ; and that they might not be able to get anything wherein they should be able to place their confidence, in order that they might place it only in Him. And thus do I understand that Christ in so doing aimed at two things : the one that His disciples should be disengaged ; and the other, that they should learn to confide in Him, and to depend upon Him. By gold, silver, and metal, I understand money—coins made of gold, silver, and metal ; and when He says "*in your girdles*," He means, in your purses, for the ancients carried their purses in their girdles.

He does not allow them to carry scrips, because He does not will that they should get provisions in one place for their subsistence in another. He does not will that they should carry a second coat or cloak, for it is not His will that their minds should be occupied about dress, when they shall have worn out what they wear. He does not will that they carry shoes, for they can do without them,

and thus walk less embarrassed. And I understand it to be for the same reason that He does not will that they take staff, wand, or stick. And because the disciples might say to Him, How, then, are we to live ? He replies by saying "*the workman is worthy of his meat*," or the journeyman of his day's wages. In that passage, "*and into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter*," &c., He orders two things: the one that they seek out the dwelling of the worthiest man there is in the place, that they may enter and abide there; and the other, that they be not inconstant, changing their quarters, such conduct being a mark of levity.

To him, who should ask me whether Christ willed and meant that His disciples should really go in the manner here indicated, and whether it be Christ's will that preachers of the Gospel should go so, I should answer him: As to the disciples of Christ, that I hold it to be most certain that they literally went forth thus, for Christ shows this to have been so (Luke xxii. 35) when He says, "*When I sent you without purse and scrip and shoes, lacked ye anything?*" and as to preachers, that I hold it to be most certain, that if their constitutions permit it, they might go as Christ's disciples went, they would succeed, and I even believe, and assuredly hold, that they would greatly profit in so doing, were it their intention to go perfectly disengaged, remitting themselves to God's providence, confiding solely upon God, who as He does not fail to the birds of the air, nor to the lilies of the field, so neither will He fail to them.

It might appear singular that Christ should command His disciples that they should not take money for the road, He not doing so Himself; for it appears that Judas held the monies that were given to Him, and since it appears also that Christ had women following Him, who, out of their own means, paid His expenses; and it will not appear singular, if it be considered, that Christ needed not to be exercised in faith as did His disciples, who were

imperfect; neither did Christ need to be disengaged from outward and material things, in order to attend to inward and spiritual ones, as did His disciples, who were imperfect. And thus do I understand that in proportion to a man's imperfection is his need the greater to follow the orders which Christ gave His disciples, provided always that he do not think perfection to consist in not taking money with all the other things, and that he be attent upon attaining the end for which he was ordered not to take them with him.

There may come another, who also will say, Since as we have already seen Christ associated with publicans and sinners, why does He order His disciples to do the opposite, ordering them to make inquiries who are the worthiest, in order that they may abide under their roofs? And to this it may be replied that intercourse with publicans and sinners could not damage Christ, either by profaning His mind or by corrupting His morals; whilst the Apostles, who were imperfect, might be by it damaged, both in the one and in the other; and that hence therefore Christ commands and orders them to associate themselves with persons of good reputation, in order that these might not injure them in either one or the other. The saints of the world, as has been already stated, avoid intercourse with profane and bad men, because the world does not judge them [the saints of the world] to be profane and bad; whilst the saints of God only avoid such intercourse, when their minds and morals are in danger of being injured by it, caring nothing for the judgment of the world when they are not exposed to this danger; as we see that Christ did, because He was wholly beyond this danger.

X. 12-15.—And when ye come into a house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not

receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment than for that city.

A salutation is the same as a short prayer, in which we pray to God for the individual, or the persons whom we salute. The ordinary salutation practised by the Jews was to say, Peace be to thee; and under this term "peace" they understood great happiness and prosperity. This being known, it is to be understood that Christ ordered His disciples, when they entered the house, which from inquiries they learned was worthy, they should salute it with the ordinary salutation. And He adds "*if the house shall be worthy,*" &c., as though promising them that their prayer should be heard in the event that the report of that house was verified; and that, in the event of its not being verified, God would give to them that, which should have been given to that house.

And when Christ subjoins "*and whosoever shall not receive you,* &c., He orders them, that when informed of the goodness of the person by his reputation, they shall go to lodge at his house; and that the man who will not receive them, or, receiving them, shall refuse to hear their evangelical preaching, they are not to stop there any longer; and He means the same with relation to any city or village that He does with the individual. And it is to be observed that, for the disciples to stop in a house or in a city, it was not enough that they should be received, it being imperative that they should also be heard. Now-days there are many who receive Christ's disciples, whilst there are but few who hearken to their words, for only they hear them, who accept in their hearts the good news which attracts them, intimating to them the general indulgence and pardon through God's justice executed upon Christ.

It must have been a Jewish custom to shake off the

dust from the feet when they wished to show the ungodliness of those with whom they had lodged. That threat with asseveration, “*Verily I say unto you, It shall be,*” &c., is very terrible against those who hear the Gospel and do not accept and receive it; and if it be most terrible against these, what shall it be against those who contradict the Gospel and persecute it? If men would but see what they do when they set themselves to contradict and persecute, under pretext of religion, I am certain that they would act more circumspectly than they ordinarily do.

X. 16-20.—Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves, be ye therefore prudent as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

Christ compares the disciples to sheep that are not in their folds, but amongst wolves. *All men of the world are wolves, so long as they are men of the world, unre-generated by the Gospel of Christ.* And I recollect having written a Consideration (livi.) illustrating this subject, showing that all men are like lions and tigers, but bound by the chains of honour, of fear, and of conscience. And Christ furnishing His disciples with the proper weapons wherewith to defend themselves against men, says to them, “*Be ye therefore prudent,*” &c., as though He should say: Now, since you are about to go amongst men of the world as sheep amongst wolves, mind that

you be like serpents in prudence, never allowing yourselves to be deceived by their words, or by their inducements, in all which it will ever be their aim to cause you to cease from being sheep, and that you become wolves like themselves; and mind that you be like doves in sincerity and simplicity.

Christ wills that His disciples so practise the prudence of serpents as to protect themselves against men of the world, that they be not led to adopt serpentine habits; and therefore He counsels them that they combine the prudence of the serpent with the simplicity of the dove; not allowing themselves to be deceived, nor practising deceit; defending themselves from evil, and not offending, &c. As to the prudence of the serpent, it suffices me to know this, that the devil deceived our first parents in the form of a serpent; and as to the sincerity of the dove, it suffices me to know this, that the Holy Spirit came upon Christ in the form of a dove, as we have seen in chapter iii.

In saying "*and beware of men*," &c., He further expounds what He has said, by saying, I tell you to make up your minds that you go as sheep amongst wolves, and to provide yourselves with the prudence of the serpent, and with the sincerity of the dove; and because you know that all men are your enemies, never commit yourselves to them in any way, not even when they shall show themselves most friendly, for then they will injure you most. And that this is so, you will experimentally see, when, contradicting your preaching, they shall persecute you, and, arrested, they shall deliver you up to councils, and they shall scourge you in their synagogues; and not contented with this, they shall bring you up before governors and kings, availing themselves of supreme power to take away your lives.

Where I understand that Christ spoke as of the time in which He spoke; at which period there were councils in Judea, which were Roman tribunals; and there were

synagogues, which were halls where the Jews assembled for the reading of their Scriptures and for addresses; and there were also kings, and there were governors or presidents. And when He says "*in their synagogues*," Christ shows that the Jews were they, who were to do all this against His disciples, as in fact they were when the disciples began to preach the Gospel; to which time I refer these words, for I do not read that the disciples were so treated whilst Christ was living amongst them; nay, I read just the contrary.

That expression, "*for My sake*," appears as said in order to mitigate the grief of persecution, which, in fact, becomes tolerable when the person considers himself persecuted for Christ's sake. In saying "*for a testimony against them and the Gentiles*," He means that the persecution of the disciples of Christ will at the day of judgment be a testimony against the impiety of the Jews, who shall have persecuted them, and of the Gentiles, who shall have been the executors of Jewish persecution.

That "*but when they shall deliver you up*," &c., is apt both to console the disciples by the consideration, that if men will be contrary and inimical to them, yet God will be in their favour, and will help them with His Holy Spirit, and likewise to bring the disciples by this to mortify their exercise of thought and speech, not pretending to defend the preaching of the Gospel, with either human reasons or human arguments, remitting the defence to what God shall at that moment give them to say; causing the Holy Spirit to speak by them, so that their words are not their own but the Holy Spirit's. From these words of Christ this is to be gathered—

*First*, that the disciples of Christ have to be convinced that they are amongst men of the world as sheep among wolves, and they who have not this conviction cannot maintain Christian decorum, which is obligatory upon disciples of Christ.

*Secondly*, that they have to arm themselves with the

prudence of the serpent against the inducements of men, and with the sincerity of the dove against the assaults of human affections and appetites ; and they who are not so armed it is impossible for them to persevere in the school of Christ.

*Thirdly*, that they have to hold all men as their enemies ; not to treat them as enemies, but to protect themselves against them as enemies ; to avoid and beware of them ; so that there be no interchange of offices between them : and they, who shall not act thus, will frequently be forced to deviate from Christian decorum. For men are even what I have stated ; [I speak of] all those, who are not regenerated by the Gospel, of all those, who are not disciples of Christ.

*Fourthly*, they have to put an end to ambition and to worldly glory, feeling pleased that the world maltreats and persecutes them as bad and perverse, not being so, resting assured that all this is the portion of those who enter into Christ's school ; and they, who shall not come to this resolve, will easily be removed from the school of Christ.

*Fifthly*, that they have to keep their human reason and prudence so mortified, as not to think of exercising it in any way to defend Christianity nor to defend the preaching of the Gospel, standing remitted to that which the Holy Spirit shall give them to say at the time of defence ; and they, who shall not thus carry this out, will constrainedly be led to say most improper things of Christ, and of the Gospel of the Christ, with which they will much more readily offend themselves, Christ and the Gospel, than defend it.

And it is not to the purpose to say that the Greek word which is here rendered "take thought," signifies anxious thought ; for if it be so, that they are only to speak that which the Holy Spirit shall at that time give them to say, what does it avail to think, even though without anxiety ? In fact, it is Christ's will that His disciples

neither depend upon men of the world, nor depend upon themselves, but that they depend upon God alone, and that they may hope for everything from Him, not only what they have to eat and to wear, but likewise what they have to say. Neither is it to the purpose to say, How do I know that this promise concerns me? I do not wish to tempt God. For this promise concerns all, who, mortifying their reasoning faculty, confide in Him, certain that God will not fail them in what He promises them; besides, *he never tempts God, who relies upon a promise of God*, and says, God tells me not to think about what I shall have to say in the presence of worldly governors and kings, for that He will at that time give me what I have to say; I know that He can do it; and I know that He would not have promised it, had He not intended to perform it; therefore I confide in this promise, and I do not care to think what I shall have to say.

Here I will state this: that I know from experience that I have never in my life spoken better than when I have spoken without having given myself a thought of what I should speak. I state the same as to writing. And I pray God that since He has brought me to discharge the duty of Christ's disciples in this fifth thing, so may He bring me to the four other preceding ones; and that He may daily more perfect me in this and in those, bringing me up to that point, that in all and everything I may be so good a disciple of Christ that I may in no way be severed from the school of Christ, until that the very image of Christ may be seen in me, and that I may be able, with St. Paul, to say to other disciples of Christ, "*Be ye imitators of me, even as I am of Christ*" (1 Cor. xi. 1).

X. 21, 22.—And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be

hated of all men for my name's sake ; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

Christ, going on to prophesy to His disciples of the persecution they were about to suffer for the Gospel, which, as I have stated, pertains not to that in Christ's time, but to that which was, has been, and is, since the coming of the Holy Spirit, shows them that the madness of men of the world would be so great against those who should become His disciples, that having forgotten the obligation of human generation [birth], the brother should cease to regard his brother, the father the child, and the child the father. I hold this to have been most assuredly verified to the letter at the time of the martyrs ; then the Christian name was so hated in the world, that, when a man became Christian, he had for enemies his own relations, who delivered him up to death. And would to God that it could not be truthfully said that Christian life is now, as to being abhorred and persecuted, what the name of Christian then was in the world. So that what Christ here prophesied, ever has been, and is verified in His disciples ; and is only not verified in proportion as they do not manifest, nor discover, themselves, to be disciples of Christ ; that if, discovering themselves the world should recognise them as such, there is no doubt but that it would do with them, what it ever has done with those, whom it has recognised. And disciples of Christ ought not to marvel, if, that just as they, when entering Christ's school, renounce the obligation of human generation [birth], embracing the obligation of Christian regeneration, so men, having forgotten the obligation of human generation [birth], treat them as a thing that no longer in any way concerns them ; nay, they ought to take it for a sure token that they are disciples of Christ when treated by men, and especially by their own relations, as enemies.

And here I note a difference between men of the world and the disciples of Christ ; that men of the world hold

Christ's disciples to be enemies, and treat them as enemies : whilst Christ's disciples, holding men of the world to be enemies, do not treat them as enemies, but as friends, living amongst them, as sheep amongst wolves.

I understand by Christ's saying "*but he that endureth to the end,*" &c., that those of His disciples shall attain salvation and eternal life who shall persevere to the death in Christ's school ; never coming forth from it, neither by death nor by life ; and I do not understand that any one comes forth from the school of Christ, but the person who abandons and leaves Christian life, either from fear or from shame of the world ; for he cuts himself off from Christian faith, and strives to justify himself by his works ; just as no one comes forth from his monastic order, but the man, who lays aside the dress and comes forth from the monastery. "*For My name,*" is the same as for My sake. In saying "*unto the end,*" He means unto death in martyrdom ; and in saying, "*shall be saved,*" He means shall attain eternal life ; from which happiness they shall be excluded, who, not being able to endure the ignominy of the cross of Christ, shall cast the cross to the ground.

X. 23.—But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another : for verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

It is of amplest deduction from these words that Christ's disciples ought, not only, not to offer themselves to martyrdom without being borne away to it, but they ought to flee from it, when by flight the Gospel is thereby more promoted than prejudiced, as we have exemplified in St. Paul : so that to flee martyrdom is not to desert Christ's school, but to maintain oneself in it, in order the more to profit by it. And it seems that because the disciples could say, *Thou, Lord, dost command us to go*

neither amongst the Gentiles nor amongst the Samaritans ; whilst, on the other hand, Thou tellest us to flee from city to city when we shall have been persecuted in all the cities of Judea, what wouldest Thou have us do ? Christ tells them, "*Verily I say unto you,*" &c., meaning, Be of good cheer, I will come before that you have made the round of the cities of Israel.

This is what is suggested by these words, which how they harmonise if understood in connection with the preaching of that particular period I know not ; neither do I know how they harmonise being understood of the preaching that was afterwards ; nor do I either know what coming this is of which Christ speaks. I feel the difficulty, and not knowing how to get out of it, I remit myself to what they say about it who speak better. I will here state this : that this is the greatest indication of the depravity of our minds, that one utterance that does not to our mind harmonise with the event, disturbs us more than do a hundred, which harmonise perfectly, to pacify and confirm us.

X. 24, 25.—The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household ? Fear them not therefore.

Christ goes on to ease the minds of His disciples as to the asperity and bitterness of the cross, and thus, in these words, He speaks to them axiomatically : It is no very great thing that you, who are My disciples, be maltreated by men of the world, since that I, who am your Master and Preceptor, have been, and am, and shall be maltreated by the very same. That Christ was about to

be called Beelzebub, we shall see in chapter xii, where the Pharisees said that Christ cast out devils by virtue of Beelzebub.

This was the title of an idol of certain Gentiles living upon the frontiers of Judea, and was said to be the common name of all idols, which they called Baal, this being the same with Beel, but one was called Baal-peor, and another Baal-zebub, signifying master or lord of flies. When He says, "*fear them not therefore*," He concludes that since He had to go through the very same which they had to go through, they had no reason to fear, when they considered that His experience and theirs would be the same; and effectively, it is of the greatest comfort for those, who are growled at, persecuted, and maltreated for the righteousness of the Gospel, to consider that Christ has previously gone through it.

X. 26, 27.—For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.

Knowing by experience that this is a fact, that it is the greatest consolation for those, who are persecuted for Christ's sake, and as was Christ, to think that their innocence and their truth will at last be seen and discovered; and considering that Christ goes on here to blend the sweet with the bitter for His disciples, I think that He availed Himself of this general maxim, "*there is nothing covered*," &c., designing to say to them: Cheer up, for although your righteousness and truthfulness be covered in the present life, it shall be revealed in the life eternal, together with the injustice and iniquity of those who shall maltreat you. And I think that Christ, when He added, "*What I tell you in darkness*," &c., meant: And since this has to be

gone through thus, wholly without consideration, fearing neither death nor infamy, you may decide to speak clearly and openly before the world those things which I now tell you secretly, and as it were, in the ear.

This apprehension satisfies me, and is worthy of Christ. From what I read in St. Mark iv. 22, where there are these same words, I think that the proper apprehension is this, that Christ, desirous of removing the suspicion from the minds of His disciples, which might have been suggested to them, when thinking, that the things which Christ communicated to them would ever remain secret, He tells them, "*for there is nothing;*" &c., meaning, I do not say this that you should keep it secret or hid; nay, I tell you to manifest and publish it, but at the proper time.

In fact it seems that it was Christ's design to keep the evangelical work secret and hid whilst He lived amongst men bodily; and that He held it so secret that not even His own disciples ever understood it until the Holy Spirit came, who made them capable of receiving it, bringing Christ's words to their memory, those which He had spoken, being with them. And that which occurred to Christ's disciples occurs to every one of us, for that, however much we read and hear of evangelical work, we never understand it until the Holy Spirit comes within us, who makes us capable of receiving it, by what we experience, and by recalling to our memory what we have read and heard concerning it.

X. 28-31.—And fear not them who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. - Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. But the very hairs

of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

This tends to confirm and to fortify the minds of those who have entered into Christ's school; in order that it may not come to pass that, scared and terrified by the furious enmity with which they are persecuted by men of the world, or with which they will be persecuted when the world shall discover them to be disciples of Christ, they should leave the school of Christ; as happens to them, who enter it, not having been drawn by God; so that in saying, "*fear not them*," &c., I understand: be not afraid of men of the world, who, though they have the power to kill the body, have not the power to kill the soul; and, when you have to fear, fear God, who alone has power to destroy soul and body. Here it is right to note two things: the one, that Christ does not tell us that we should fear God, meaning that we should fear, since He has the power to kill both body and soul, lest He kill ours, for this would be to hold us in worse than Jewish slavery, a thing most alien to the Gospel of Christ; but He tells us, that, having to live in fear, it is more sensible to fear God, than to fear man; the other thing is, that it is God's sole prerogative to sentence souls to perish in hell.

When Christ adds, "*and are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?*" &c., I understand it to be His purpose to certify us of two things which greatly console us in our troubles. The one is, that the will of God concurs in the evil which men do us, for, without that, they would not have the power to do us evil; this is proved by the sparrows, which, being of so little value that two of them are sold for the smallest current coin in point of value, God thinks so much of them that neither dies without His will, as though He should say: If this be so in relation to a bird, how much more will it be so in relation to yourselves? The other is, that although men of the world

take away our lives, stripping us of these bodies, we are certain that we shall lose nothing, for God holds us in such account that even the very hairs of our heads are numbered, so that not one of them shall perish.

These two things are of such importance that the less is most adequate to sustain joyousness and perfect security, divested of all human and carnal fear, and filled with much divine and spiritual love; and therefore we ought to pray continuously to God, that He so impress these two things upon our hearts, that we may never doubt their truth; and this assurance will be most adequate to mortify and to kill in us all our regard for the world, and all our sensual desires.

That, "*and even your very hairs*," &c., is worthy of great consideration, in order to understand how strict is the account which God keeps, however, with those only, that are Christ's disciples; with those, who, accepting the righteousness of Christ, have taken possession of the kingdom of God, leaving to others the government of these, which they call, second causes. And with relation to this will of God and providence of God, I have written two considerations (xl. and xlix.) and one question (27).

X. 32, 33.—Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father, who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father, who is in heaven.

I understand that Christ designs by these words to animate the dejected, and to awaken fear in the imperfect, in those who have not attained to serve from love; as though He should say to them, be assured of this, that the man, who shall confess Me, I will confess him; and that the man, who shall deny Me, I will deny him. Where it is to be understood that they confess

Christ before men, who, having stifled in themselves all cravings after earthly glory and self-indulgence, state frankly, without fear for life or for honour, that Jesus is the Messiah, promised in the law; that He is the Son of God, one and the same with God, who, having taken upon Himself the sins of men, and having been chastised for them, has reconciled us to God; and that they enjoy this reconciliation who believe.

But mark this, the confession is then only good when it proceeds from the heart; and that it cannot proceed from the heart, unless it be in the heart; and that it cannot be in the heart, unless the Holy Spirit have placed it there; and that it is most excellent, when proceeding from the heart, it is stated in the presence of men, who contradict it, despise it, and persecute it. It is thus that we must confess Christ, confessing Him too by leading a Christian life, conforming our life with that of Christ; and acting thus, Christ will confess us, embracing us as His members.

It is likewise to be understood that they deny Christ before men, who, fearing the infamy of the cross of Christ, give up the Christian faith or Christian life; whom Christ will rightly deny before His heavenly Father, addressing to them those hard words, "*I tell you, I know you not,*" as also those which follow them (Luke xiii. 27).

Here some one will say that he believes the former part of these words, as to the confession, but that he does not believe the second, as to the denial, having experimentally seen the contrary; for it is a fact that St. Peter denied Christ before men, but Christ has not denied St. Peter before God, nay, He has raised him above others. And to this it shall be replied, that Christ will not deny those, who shall deny as St. Peter denied, through cowardice, pusillanimity, and frailty, and with levity, but not pertinaciously; and that Christ will deny those, who shall deny Him, as did Judas, with malice, and malignity, and pertinaciously; as also those who, following Judas' track,

act towards Christ's members as Judas acted towards Christ. And here it is to be considered that none deny Christ, excepting those who, being Christ's, state that they are not Christ's, and that they do not recognise Christ; it cannot be said that they deny Christ, who have never entered Christ's school.

X. 34-36.—Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

These words bear upon that which Christ has above stated, "*brother shall deliver up brother to death.*" Where it appears that because this dissension, of which Christ prophesied, might seem extraordinary to the disciples, as being even much greater than that which is ordinarily seen amongst men, Christ says to them: "*Think not that I am come to send peace,*" &c., as though He should say: Now mind; never imagine, nor think, that My coming is about to bring outward peace upon earth, for I would have you know that it will be just the contrary; for, instead of peace, it will bring war, causing enmity, even between those, that are nearest related by human generation, as, for instance, father and son, &c.

Where it is not to be understood that the intention of Christ's coming was to cause this dissension; but that this dissension results from His coming; and that, through no fault of Christ's, or of Christ's disciples, for He and they are types of peace; but through the malice and malignity of men of the world; who are so inimical to God, and so contrary to all that is God's, that postponing the obligation of human generation, the unchristian son persecutes

the Christian father, &c., to the death. And if men of the world, mastered by their passions, lay aside the obligation of human generation, and become metamorphosed from men into wild beasts; why shall it appear extraordinary to the disciples of Christ, to allow themselves to be mastered by divine inspirations, laying aside the obligation of human generation, in order to follow the obligation of Christian regeneration?

Where He says, "*to set at variance*," the Greek word signifies to cut in twain that which was closely united; "*the household*" represents domestics, servants, dependants. And it is in fact so, that a Christian has no greater enemies in the world than those of his own house, when they are not likewise Christians.

Here the Jews are scandalised, for they say it is impossible that Christ can have been the Messiah, since as well from what He Himself says, "*that He came to send a sword*," which is tantamount to war, into the world; as from what is experimentally seen, that the Gospel of Christ causes dissensions and discords in the world, Christ is not the author of peace but of war; whilst Isaiah (ix. 5), speaking of the Messiah, calls Him the Prince of Peace, and says, "*that of the increase of His kingdom and peace there shall be no end*." The Jews would not be scandalised at all if they but considered Christ as a lamb, who did not even bleat when He was led to the slaughter; and if they considered the disciples of Christ as sheep amongst wolves, from whom Christ removes every motive by which the peace of the world is disturbed, divesting them of carnal desires, of vindictive affections, of longings for wealth, or the attainment of honours and dignities, and finally from all the things that men of the world covet; in order that, they having nothing to bring them into competition with them, there should be no field for contention; and that Christ moreover does not leave them even the external demonstrations of sanctity, in order that they should not even come into competition with saints of the world: in all which Christ shows

Himself to be the Prince of Peace, as Isaiah prophesied concerning Him, and shows that His empire is all peace, as He Himself prophesied: for it is a fact that there are none under His rule, except those, who are as sheep amongst wolves.

Christ rules over these and in these. He is their Prince and Ruler, and thus it comes to pass that He is a Pacific Ruler, and His rule is pacific, although in this life men of the world make most cruel war upon them, who are under this the happiest rule; which in the life eternal will be in consummate peace and in consummate happiness, in which neither men of the world nor hellish fiends take part; and then the perverse Jews, who stumble at these words of Christ, shall see how peculiarly the words of Isaiah agree in Christ. Here we ought to consider what is said upon that passage in chapter v., "*Blessed are the peacemakers*," in order that it may be understood that this kingdom of Christ is nothing other than peace. And it is thus that we, who accept the Gospel of Christ, being reconciled with God, have peace with God, which we feel in our consciences, as St. Paul felt it, when he said, "*Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*" (Rom. v. 1). And having peace with God, we have peace amongst ourselves, and we have peace with all men, not giving them more occasion for war than they wish to take, who make war upon us as upon mortal enemies.

Come, aye, O Lord my God, may that most happy and glorious time soon come, in which the world shall know that Thine only begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, is Prince of Peace, and that His empire is peace; then shall the world to its greater torment see, that there has ever been great peace and great quietness in Thy kingdom, and thus we, who are Thy children, shall be perfectly glorified, with our Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ our Lord.

X. 37-39.—He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that

loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it : and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

Here I understand that because one might say, My father shall not become my enemy, for I will never cease to discharge my filial obligation, Christ here speaks judicially: If love to thy father shall draw thee more to fulfil the obligation of a child of Adam, by human generation, than the love which thou hast to Me shall draw thee to fulfil the obligation of a child of God, by Christian regeneration, thou wilt not be worthy of Me. It is a fact in the instance of the sons of Zebedee, that if love to their father had drawn them more than love to Christ, they would never have left their father in his fishing-boat to follow Christ, and thus they would have been unworthy of Christ: the same is true of the other, who wished to go to bury his father, in order to fulfil the obligation of human generation; which frequently draws us in a totally different direction to the obligation of Christian regeneration. It will be expressed thus: My father, my brothers, my children, and my relatives wish that I strive to aggrandise myself in the world; to be esteemed, honoured, and wealthy; and they would rather wish to see me dead, than to see me dishonoured, insulted, and poor: whilst Christ wills that I wholly suppress self-esteem, ambition, and lust of wealth, and that I seek pleasure in being dishonoured, insulted, and even martyrised.

If I wish to satisfy the obligation of human generation, I shall, in doing so, deviate from the obligation of Christian regeneration, and thus, the love of my relatives influencing me more than the love of Christ, I shall have no part in Christ. And if I wish to satisfy the obligation of Christian regeneration, I shall, in doing so, deviate from the obliga-

tion of human generation (birth), and thus the love of Christ influencing me more than the love of my relatives, then that will come to pass which Christ has said as to dissensions and persecutions. So that the man loves his father more than Christ, when he is more drawn by the obligation of human generation, than by the obligation of Christian regeneration. To be worthy of Christ is the same as to be a true member of Christ, to be incorporated into Christ, by which incorporation God does not look upon the man for what he is in himself, but for what he is in Christ.

In saying, "*and he that taketh not his cross,*" &c., Christ declares that the man's cross is all the ill and all the damage that result to him from loving Christ more than his father, mother, &c. Christ also added, "*and followeth after Me,*" meaning, and walks in My steps, who follow the will of God, disregarding the obligation of human generation. And here it is to be understood that that is not a cross which I voluntarily assume, self-inflicted maltreatment; but that which I take up by God's will, feeling pleased that the world despises me, afflicts me, and maltreats me. This is the Christian's cross, for it is like the cross of Christ; and he that does not shoulder this cross in this world is unworthy of Christ.

That, "*he that findeth his life,*" &c., I understand this to be said by way of consolation to those who, taking their cross, follow after Christ; of whom Christ says that they find their lives, meaning that all men of the world have lost their lives—lives that are condemned to eternal death; whilst those, in the meanwhile, find their lives, their souls, who accept the Gospel, by which they are justified, and are thus habilitated for resurrection and life eternal. Christ says that, of those who shall lose their souls, their lives, laying them down upon the executioner's block, out of love to Christ, and of the obligation of Christian regeneration, and who give up all the satisfactions and sensual pleasures in which men of the world indulge.

And He states, moreover, that they, who shall thus lose their souls, their lives, shall find them, for they shall be raised up and live the life eternal with Christ.

This is the highest perfection, and the greatest grace of God is needed, for a man to make up his mind to lose what he sees, with the expectation of getting that which he does not see: and just as I hold it to be certain that a man will never attain to this, unless God Himself draw him; so likewise do I believe that the most powerful means, whereby God attracts those whom He does draw to this, is to give them some intimations and perceptions of the happiness of the life eternal; giving them the assurance, that, in losing the present life, they will gain the life eternal. They who are destitute of these intimations and perceptions, and of this assurance, cannot despise the present life, nor can they love the life eternal.

X. 40-42.—He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

In these words of Christ we understand three things. *The first*, that, in receiving and entertaining Christ's disciples, when they travel to preach the Gospel of Christ, or when in flight from the persecution of men, we receive and offer hospitality to Christ Himself; for that they leave their homes for Christ's sake; and that, in entertaining Christ, we entertain God, who sent Christ into

the world ; so that in offering hospitality to the disciples of Christ, we entertain Christ and we entertain God.

*The Second*, that when we receive and offer hospitality to Christ's disciples, we have only to mind that they are disciples of Christ ; so that we be not moved by the obligation of human generation, but by the obligation of Christian regeneration ; not with the intention that our good work be recompensed, but with the intention, that, through our good work, God be glorified by that disciple, who, through our instrumentality, comes to be more confirmed and certified that God is true and faithful, in that He fulfils what He promises.

*The Third*, that our works when wrought with the intention stated, are recompensed by God in the present life, but with rewards affecting the other life, the reward responding to the work ; for that, he, who receives a prophet, that is, one who has the gift of interpreting Holy Scripture and particularly of the prophetic portions of it, the host only regarding him as a prophet, God will give him the gift of prophecy : whilst to the host, who shall receive the just man, justified by Christ, simply because he is a just man, God will give the faith, wherewith he also may be just.

Here it has to be observed, that in order that I may receive a prophet, simply because he is a prophet, and a just man, simply because he is just, I must needs know that the one is a prophet and that the other is just, which knowledge I cannot have, unless by the grace of God ; and thus it will come to pass that the reward of prophecy and the reward of righteousness, which I obtain, will not be attributed to me, but to the grace of God which wrought in me ; and thus there will remain nothing in me, whereof I might vainly glorify myself, saying, I have the gift of prophecy, because I received a prophet, neither am I just, because I received a just man.

Christ, insisting still further upon the subject, in order to provoke the minds of the imperfect to exercise charity

towards His disciples, says, “ *whosoever shall give a cup of cold water only,*” &c., meaning that the least thing in the world that we shall do for those, who are His disciples, having regard to nothing else than their being disciples of Christ, shall be recompensed to us by God, with spiritual and divine gifts, as is above stated. And the same is to be understood here in that passage “ *in the name of a disciple only,*” as above “ *in the name of a prophet,*” and “ *in the name of a just man;*” it is a Hebraism, which means, because he is a just man, because he is a prophet, and because he is a disciple. From that expression “ *to one of these little ones,*” it seems that these words were uttered in the presence of other persons as well as in that of the disciples. He speaks “ *of cold water,*” pure and without commixture, even as taken from the spring or fountain.

## CHAPTER XI.

XI. 1-6.—And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities. Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, and said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

The first thing worthy of consideration here is, that the evangelist almost always associates these two things, he says that Christ taught and preached; in order that we should understand that they are distinct and different. Christ preached the Gospel of the Kingdom, and He taught how to live according to the obligation of the Gospel.

St. Paul styles those, who preach, apostles; and he styles those, who teach, doctors: he says, that the former have the gift of the Apostolate, and the latter, of doctrine.

In the embassy which St. John sent to Christ, I find this difficulty, that it is impossible that he could pretend

[not]<sup>1</sup> to know for himself what he sent to ask, since he had shown that he knew it, when in his mother's womb, and when at the Jordan; whether it was his aim that his disciples should know it, or that the multitudes should know it, before whom he preached it, it does seem extraordinary that St. John should call in question that which he had affirmed at the Jordan, when he said, "*Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world*" (John i. 29); and it seems yet more extraordinary that John should wish that Christ should testify concerning Himself, he being able to give it, in the manner in which he had given it; and his testimony would have been more believed, especially upon the part of his disciples, on account of the high reputation for sanctity which he had amongst all men; and besides that, that more credit is ordinarily given to what others say of us, than to what we say of ourselves.

As to Christ's reply, I see that it indeed was most adequate to certify St. John, had he been in doubt; but I do not see how it was adequate to certify St. John's disciples; who, how they could know what they asked, by those works, I know not, and much less do I see how the other multitudes could, who, it appears, expected the Messiah in very different garb and station from that in which they saw Christ. I see the difficulties, and not knowing how to get out of them, I hope that God Himself will get me out, when it shall please Him. In the meantime, I am not ashamed of my ignorance, nay, I pride myself upon it, in order that it may be known that this my present opinion is my own.

Here, indeed, I will say this: that, from Christ's reply, he, who should have good inward eyes, might well understand that He was the Messiah, not by the miracles, but by what Christ said after the miracles, videlicet, "*and to the poor the gospel is preached.*" For it is so, that combining this, which was seen, and was confirmed by miracles, with

<sup>1</sup> The "not" is omitted in the text.

that which was prophesied by Isaiah (chap. lxi.), it might be clearly known that Christ was the Messiah ; for Isaiah, speaking in the person of Christ, says thus : “ The Spirit of the Lord, my Lord, is upon me, for the Lord hath anointed me ‘ *to preach*,’ or evangelise, ‘ *the afflicted*,’ or poor ; He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted ; to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to the prisoners ; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,” &c. ; so that whoever should compare what he saw and heard of the evangelisation of the poor of which Christ spake, with these words, he might know that He was the Messiah, being, however, enlightened by the Spirit of God to see how the Gospel was preached to the poor, and to understand Isaiah’s words, which Christ Himself interprets as concerning Himself in Luke iv. 18-22.

Here it is to be observed that, by the words of the prophet, one may perfectly understand what Christ means when He says, “ *to the poor the gospel is preached*,” or, the poor are evangelised ; for it is so that the Hebrew word here rendered “ *the poor* ” signifies the afflicted, the despicable, and the beggarly ; and such practically they are who accept the preaching of the Gospel. I mean, that in order to accept it, they must know themselves to be such, and hold themselves to be such ; just as the sick man must know himself to be sick, in order to bring himself to take medicine ; and because it likewise is so, that Isaiah, in saying to bind up the bruised or broken in heart, declares that preaching is profitable for those who hear it, and that they who are afflicted or poor are men bruised or broken of heart ; and the captives are the same as are the prisoners, who by the Gospel enter into liberty and come forth from captivity. And it is most charming that Isaiah calls the period of the preaching of the Gospel the acceptable, the agreeable, year of the Lord.

Here an answer, that I recollect having written,<sup>1</sup> would come in appositely, showing that of the things that are

<sup>1</sup> Reply to Question xxvii.

done in the world by the will of God, forasmuch as they would not have been done had He not willed that they should be done, only those please and satisfy Him consummately, which He Himself operates by His Holy Spirit in us who accept the Gospel.

Christ, in subjoining "*and blessed is he that shall not be scandalised in me*," seems to have designed to remedy that which human prudence might allege to him, who set himself to compare what he heard in the preaching of Christ with what we have quoted from Isaiah, persuading him that the words of the prophet did not attach to Christ, for that He was apparently a man like others, neither manifesting that greatness, nor that majesty, which the Jews anticipated would characterise the Messiah. And it is as certain that Scripture never states that any were ever scandalised in Christ, excepting the Jews (1 Cor. i. 23); nay, our own experience shows us that it is as peculiar to the Jews, and to those who have Jewish minds, to be scandalised in Christ, as it is peculiar to the Gentiles, and to those who have heathenish minds, to laugh at Christ. "*He that shall not be scandalised at me*," is equivalent to saying, shall not stumble at My humility and abjectness. Upon scandal I have written a Consideration (lxxvi.)

XI. 7-10.—And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is He of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

It appears that because of the question put by St. John's disciples, the multitudes who were present might gather that St. John was not of that authority and holiness that they had thought, since he doubted concerning Christ; Christ willed by these and the following words to magnify St. John's authority. And in the *first* place, He says that he was not "*a reed moved by the wind*," which all they are who are not firm in the truth which they know; and which St. John would have been, if, having borne testimony to Christ at Jordan, he had doubted of Christ in prison. *Secondly*, He says St. John was not a man of the lasciviousness, levity, and licentiousness which characterise those, who dress fastidiously through wantonness and for appearance, thinking highly of themselves, on account of the refinement and beauty of their dress.

*Thirdly*, He says that not only was he a prophet, but of greater excellency and dignity than a prophet; and Christ, showing wherein this greater excellency consisted, quotes Malachi iii. 1, founding it upon two things: the one, in that another prophet had prophesied concerning him; and the other, in that his office was of greater excellence than that of any prophet. And St. John's office consisted in preparing the way for Christ; this St. John did by preaching sorrow for sin, penitence, or repentance, and baptising in water, which was tantamount to disturbing the water in the pool, in order that Christ might clear it, as is stated in chapter iii. And this St. John's preparation is always needed by us, in order that we may accept Christ; because, as I have just previously said, only they take medicine who know themselves to be sick; and St. John's peculiar office is to show us our sicknesses, and to show us at the same time Christ, who alone can heal them; giving us the medicine of the Gospel, remission of our sins, in which our health consists.

The prophet Malachi literally speaks thus: "*Behold I send my angel to clear the way before me, and the Lord,*

*whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the angel of the covenant whom ye desire; Behold He cometh, saith the Lord of Hosts.*" Here it is worthy of consideration that Malachi and Isaiah agree as to St. John's office, which was to prepare, to make straight, and to clear Christ's way. And it is worthy of still greater consideration that Malachi calls Christ the Angel of the covenant; for it is so, He is the person who was sent by God into the world, whence the name of Angel pertains to Him; He has reconciled men with God, taking men's sins upon Himself, and being chastised for them with that rigour as though He had committed them all Himself; so that Christ is the Angel of the covenant, because He has made peace between God and us. They, who do not enjoy this peace, do not know the benefit of Christ, and consequently do not know Christ; whilst they, who know Christ, know the benefit of Christ, and enjoy the peace and covenant that Christ made between God and man.

XI. 11.—Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

From these words of Christ we learn two things: *the one* that St. John was equal to the greatest of the patriarchs and prophets, for that up to that time there had been no mere man born his superior, and this serves to give authority to St. John's testimony and to his preaching; and *the other* that the least saint of those who are under the Gospel is greater than the greatest saint under the law, since it is so that he is greater than St. John the Baptist, who was so great that there was no other greater, and this serves to extol the greatness of the Gospel. Had Christ not stated these two things, it would indeed appear

to be a strong thing to say, that St. John was equal to Moses, and it would appear to be an exceedingly strong thing to say that the least saint under the Gospel—for these are they, who are in the kingdom of heaven—is greater than St. John the Baptist and than Moses; but Christ, who is truth itself, having stated it, we must hold it to be true.

The first thing is [the relative position] between Moses and St. John. I do not wish to impose upon myself the task of verifying it; for I should, in speaking of it, be forced to exercise learning, and not experience; besides, it is easy to believe it. But I will verify the second, which is [the relative position] between St. John and the least saint under the Gospel, because it is difficult to believe it; and thus I say that the incorporation, with which the saints under the Gospel are incorporated into Christ, brings it to pass that the least of them is greater than St. John the Baptist, for God considers in each one of them that which He considers in Christ, every one of them being able to say with St. Paul, "*I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me*" (Gal. ii. 20), and because incorporated into Christ they are children of God, and they receive the spirit of children [adoption]: so that their superiority does not consist in the peculiar mode of existence of the individual, who is least in the kingdom of heaven, but in an existence that is incorporated into Christ; and thus as Christ is greater than St. John, so the least of the members of Christ is greater than St. John, whom I do not understand to have been incorporated into Christ, because Christ had not then been chastised upon the cross for our sins, upon which chastisement our incorporation into Him depends; neither likewise do I understand that he could have the Spirit of Christ, for that was not communicated to men until that Christ had been glorified.

The benefit of Christ was indeed the portion of St. John, as also of other saints, under the law, for they remitted themselves to the justice which had to be executed

upon Christ; but they never shared incorporation into Christ, for that was not then wrought; the experience of the saints under the law in connection with Christ crucified, being analogous to that of the saints under the Gospel in connection with Christ glorified; for just as the saints under the Gospel enjoy Christ glorified, hoping that they also have to be glorified with Him, whilst they yet bear about this passible and mortal flesh; so the saints under the law enjoyed Christ crucified, hoping to be incorporated into Him and justified by Him, but their flesh still molested and disquieted them, because Christ had not yet slain it upon the cross. This is as to incorporation into Christ. And as to the Spirit of Christ, which is a filial spirit, it is clear that the saints under the law had no share in that, for the filial spirit was not given to them, but a servile spirit.

This difference of the spirits appears from those words of Christ, where, rebuking His disciples because they would fain imitate Elijah, He said to them, "*You know not of what spirit you are*" (Luke ix. 55); and it appears from what St. John says: "*For the Spirit was not yet given, for Jesus was not yet glorified*" (John vii. 39); and it likewise appears from what St. Paul says: "*For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but you have received the spirit of adoption*" (Rom. viii. 15). And thus it readily follows that because the least of those, who, being connected with the Gospel, is in the kingdom of God, is a child; whilst the greatest of those connected with the law, is a servant; that that comes to be true which Christ says, that the least of those who are under the Gospel is greater than St. John the Baptist, since the one, however little he may be, is, after all, a son; whilst the other, however great he may be, is, after all, a servant; and although it frequently happens that a servant is more worthy than a son, as I understand that many saints under the law have been more worthy than many saints under the Gospel, yet the son transcends the servant in dignity.

And I have dealt with this very subject in my Commentary upon the 149th Psalm, and in a reply to a Question [xix.]

In that expression "*born of women*," it is clear that Christ is not comprehended; not that He was not born of women, but because the Son of God is beyond all generalisation.

XI. 12-15.—And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elijah, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

From these words of Christ we understand three things. The *first*, that from the time that St. John began to preach, men began, as it were, to instruct themselves how to enter into the kingdom of heaven, beginning by repentance and the recognition of Christ as the Messiah, as the King of this kingdom. Where He says "*suffereth violence*," His meaning is: is sacked, is taken by force; whilst it might be said that the saints of the world, who seek and strive to justify themselves by their works, design to enter the kingdom of heaven upon stipulated terms, but they do not enter, for it does not surrender upon conditions, and thus only the violent enter it, they who storm it, not by works, but by faith; their violence consisting in the subjection of their understandings, their judgments, and their ratiocination to the obedience of Christian faith, by which entrance is gained into the kingdom of heaven.

The Jews tried to enter the kingdom of heaven by compact, stating that Christ was promised to them, and they have remained outside; whilst the Gentiles, disregarding compact and following after strength of faith,

take it by assault and sack it. The *second* thing, that we ~~here~~ understand, is, that as soon as the kingdom of heaven began to be sacked, then the kingdom of the law and the prophets began to fail likewise; for when they, who are God's people, entered into the kingdom of heaven, where they are ruled by the Holy Spirit, they do not need the law and the prophets; that in this case occurring to the people of God which occurs to a child; for that just as a child, whilst he is a child, not having arrived at years of discretion, is governed by a tutor or pedagogue, and, that after he has attained discretion, he no longer needs a tutor, ruling himself by himself, in some things according to the training which the tutor gave him, and in others according to what seems to him to be best; so the people of God, when they were in childhood, had for tutors and governors the law and the prophets; but after that they had entered into the kingdom of heaven, having no need of the law and the prophets, they are ruled by the Holy Spirit; which in some things conforms with the law, and in others follows the obligation of Christian regeneration; so that the Holy Spirit has succeeded to the law in the government of the people of God. They, who do not feel this government, are not the children of God, nor are they in the kingdom of heaven; and they feel this government, who begin to feel themselves drawn with greater force to the obligation of Christian regeneration than to the obligation of human generation; to the love of Christ, of which we have spoken above, than to the love of their relatives. The similitude of the child who is placed under the tutor, is taken from St. Paul (Galatians iii.) I state this in order that it may be the more appreciated.

The *third* thing that we understand from the words of Christ is, that St. John the Baptist is the Elijah, whom Christ had just before stated had come, and whom the Jews had treated as they wished. And here Christ openly showed Himself to be the Messiah; and because it is a thing of great importance, nay of all importance, Christ

added, "*he that hath ears to hear, let him hear*," to wake up His hearers to mark well what He said to them. Here it is well to observe what Christ says, that from the time of St. John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven is taken by force, and that up to that time the law and the prophets were in exercise, is not to be understood rigorously; for it is so, that these two things properly commenced to exist at the coming of the Holy Spirit, who, by placing men in the kingdom of heaven, withdrew them from the rule of the pedagogue; so that we may understand that from the time of St. John they began to feel these two things, and that from the coming of the Holy Spirit they began to see them.

XI. 16-19.—But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.

Starting with this comparison, it is right to observe that Christ more frequently than not moulded His similes in a style wholly paradoxical. Thus He says, that the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking valuable precious stones, &c., and He means, that they who enter into the kingdom of heaven are like this merchant. It is the same in the parable of the ten virgins, and in others that we shall have to point out. But the first is this, where He says that the Jews were like boys; whilst He means, that He and St. John the Baptist were like boys; for, just as boys said to other boys, their companions, whom

they had been unable to move to laughter by laughing, or to weep by weeping; so He and St. John might say to the Jews, that they had been unable to convert them, either by the ascetic life of the one, or by the common life of the other. So that playing on the flute may be referred to Christ's life, and the mournful things may be referred to St. John's austerities, which the Jews calumniated, saying that they were diabolic; calumniating also Christ's mode of life, saying that it was profane, so that they found nothing that could satisfy them.

And Christ, when He adds "*but wisdom is justified of her children*," means, that He and St. John, as children of God, justified the wisdom of God, although in the most different manner,—the one leading a life of austerity, whilst the other lived unrestrainedly; thus preventing men of the world from finding any way of exculpating themselves, by inculpating the wisdom of God, who has propounded both ways to them. Where it is to be understood that, just as Christ justified the wisdom of God by living bodily amongst men, so also does He justify the wisdom of God by living in the spirit in those who are His members; and thus likewise does it come to pass that they too, as children of God, justify the wisdom of God, as opposed to the wisdom of the world.

This appears to me a right apprehension, and it would not be amiss to understand, that if indeed the Jews, as the children of the wisdom of the world, and as saints of the world, condemned St. John's mode of life as excessively ascetic, and condemned Christ's mode of life as excessively free; that true Christians, as the children of divine wisdom, and as saints of God, acknowledge and approve, as good, the divine counsel by which God ordained that St. John should live as he lived, and that Christ should live as He lived.

As to the divine counsel in the life of St. John, I remit myself to what I have said upon chapter iii.; and as to the divine counsel in the life of Christ, I remit myself to what I have said in an epistle, where I speak of the

reasons why Christ at times discovers Himself and at other times hides Himself, and to what I have stated in a Consideration (lxxxix.), where I assign six reasons why it appeared to be necessary that the Son of God, made man, should have lived amongst men as He lived.

Thus do I understand these words of Christ, and I think that I should understand them much better had I known the mode in which those boys played, who, as one may gather, sitting in the market-place, were divided into two companies, the one of whom addressed the words, here given by Christ, to the other: and that which I here gather is this, that only the children of the wisdom of God, those who are wise by the Spirit of God, recognise the divine counsel of God Himself in the works of the children of God, of which human prudence is wholly incapable, and then most so when it is most polished; for the moment when man is most blind to the perception of the things of God is then, when he thinks that he sees; there being no one more blind than he is then.

XI. 20-24.—Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the

land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.

From these words we may infer as a consequence, that at the day of judgment, they will be more chastised, who, having had more opportunities for departing from evil and for applying themselves to good, and thus to live modestly and purely in the present life, shall have led profane and worldly lives. And here that is much to the purpose, which I often repeat, that the wicked always come off badly when associated with the good. Had Christ not preached in Chorazin, in Bethsaida, and Capernaum, they would not have come to be punished, at the day of judgment, worse than Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom. Here two doubts present themselves: the one is, whether outward miracles are adequate, without inward movement, to work penitence, sorrow for sin, or repentance; whilst the other is, how can these two things be made to harmonise, that there be predestination, and that these cities, against which Christ here declaims, should deserve to be so rebuked and so chastised, as Christ threatens them?

As to the first doubt, I say thus from what I have attained, that outward miracles are adequate, without inward movement, to induce outward penitence, grief for sin, and repentance, with which man departs from outward evil and applies himself to that which is good outwardly; but they are not adequate to induce that inward penitence, that grief for sin, and that repentance, with which man departs from inward wrong, and applies himself to inward right; and I say that they are not adequate, because this effect is only wrought by the Holy Spirit, who works inwardly. That such is the fact appears from this, that many saw Christ's miracles and externally repented; but as that repentance was human, it did not penetrate inwardly; it changed the exterior, but it did not change the interior; and I understand Christ rebuked these cities in relation to this external change, because they had not

made it, which they could have made, moved by the miracles which they saw, as Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom would have done.

And if any one suggest, why should these cities have made this change or demonstration, and not those ? I should reply, that I think that these would have done so, because their vices were more apparent, and because they had no external works wherewith to justify themselves, covering their inward impiety and exculpating their outward bad mode of living, as had those, which not regarding themselves as greatly inculpated with external vices, and regarding themselves as holy by their external works, could not come to the knowledge of their inward impiety, nor could they judge themselves to be very guilty by their external life. And here it is to be understood how dangerous are works, when they do not proceed from a pious, just, and holy mind. As to the second doubt, I remit myself to the discourse which I have written upon predestination, faith and works, grace and free-will, in which I make special mention of these cities.

That which is here rendered "*many of His miracles*," is, in the Greek, the majority of His mighty acts, but He means miracles, works wrought by supernatural virtue and power. In saying "*they would have repented*," or, *they would have shown themselves penitent "in sackcloth and ashes*," He touches upon a Jewish practice; this was, that they who recognised that they had offended against God, dressed themselves in sackcloth, and sat in dust or in ashes; of which there is ample mention in Holy Scripture. When He says "*they would have remained*," &c., He means, the successors of those who dwelt in that city, not being consumed as were both they and it. He says, "*for the land*," instead of the inhabitants of the land.

XI. 25-30.—At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and

earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

These words teem throughout with divinity, so much so, that there are no other in Holy Scripture to vie with them; and in proportion as they are more divine, so ought they to be the more and the better considered. As I do not find how they can depend upon what precedes them in St. Matthew, I remit myself to St. Luke's narrative (x. 17), which relates that the disciples of Christ having returned from a preaching tour, upon which they had been sent, they, greatly elated, report to Christ the miracles they had wrought, when on their way preaching, and Christ tells them, that they should not rejoice over the miracles wrought, but because their names are written in heaven; and that Christ at that moment felt such a holy exultation of spirit and such inward jubilation, that manifesting His inward pleasure by outward words, He broke forth, saying, "I thank Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth," &c. Where considering the purpose, which, according to St. Luke, Christ had in uttering these words, and considering the very words themselves, I understand that Christ, representing to Himself, and bringing before Himself, all the glory and happiness of those, who were, through Him,

about to become the children of God ; it being already in the divine mind, in which all their names were already written, He, perfectly happy and content, was inwardly moved to render thanks to God in these words for the predestination of those whom He has predestinated.

And thus I understand that the secret of predestination, with all that is annexed to it, is that which Christ here says God has hidden from the wise and prudent, and has revealed to infants, for I understand that in saying "*thou hast hidden this*," He means that of which He had just been speaking to the disciples : "*I rejoice, however, that your names are written in heaven.*" Do not rejoice that the demons submit themselves to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven, for God has predestinated you to eternal life, which He will give you. They, who feel His vocation, being disciples of Christ and being in Christ's divine school, know themselves to be predestinated of God, and have great reason why they should rejoice and be glad, both on their own account and that of all the members of Christ, imitating this joy which Christ here manifested ; and they, who are without this feeling and without this knowledge, have great reason why they should grieve and be sad, whilst they ought not to despair ; on the contrary, they should earnestly pray to God that He give them this feeling and knowledge, and that, after having given it to them, He should increase it in them.

Christ calls those wise and prudent who are largely endowed with human prudence, with natural light, and with the knowledge of good and evil, which man acquired by eating of the fruit of that tree. He calls those infants who are like little children, for that by Christian regeneration they have renounced human prudence, natural light, the knowledge of good and evil, never wishing to exercise it on any thing nor in any way, knowing it to be blind and dark ; and for that they have embraced the spiritual light, and holding that to be sure, firm, and true, which

they see by this light, they doubt every other, and are, in fact, like children; for that just as children know nothing of themselves, and rely upon what is told them, as to temporal things; so they, neither knowing nor caring to know anything of themselves, abide by that with which they are inwardly inspired, as to divine things.

And here it may appear strange to some one, that Christ should render thanks to God equally, for hiding His purposes from the wise and prudent, and for revealing them to infants and children; for it appears to him that Christ should render thanks to God for what He does to the latter, and that He should pray that He would do the same to the former. To whom I shall reply thus: that considering what St. Paul says (1 Cor. i., ii.) against the wisdom and the wise men of the world, and considering what I have frequently experienced in myself, being delighted that they, who seek to understand spiritual and divine things with their mental powers and natural judgment, are incapable of them, I understand that because the glory of God is alike illustrated, as well by the blindness of the wise men of the world, as by the light of the children of God, Christ gave thanks to God equally for both. Where it is not to be understood that the glory of God is illustrated by the fact that the wise men of the world cannot understand the secrets of God; but that they cannot understand them, whilst they seek to understand them by their wisdom; and that failure in their design is that which illustrates the glory of God; and on that account Christ thanks the Father; and against that St. Paul speaks; and for that reason, I say I frequently experience pleasure.

Christ, subjoining "*even so, Father,*" &c., affirms that this thing for which He thanks God, depends wholly upon the will of God: He does so, because He so wills it, it pleases Him and it gratifies Him, that it be thus; without being swayed by anything, save His will alone, which is, in all and everything, most righteous and most holy; although

human prudence is incapable of comprehending either the righteousness or the holiness that there is in it. It is to be observed that when He here says “*for so it seemed good in Thy sight,*” there is in the Greek that word (*ευδοκια*) which St. Paul constantly employs when he wishes that we should understand that our predestination wholly depends upon the sole will of God, who has contented Himself in predestinating us to eternal life of His sole goodness and munificence; from which and from the obedience of Christ, who was pleased that we should be chastised in His flesh, we have to acknowledge our predestination and vocation, justification and glorification, assigning no part of it to our merits, nor to anything that we have of our own, in order that all the glory may be God’s and Christ’s.

Christ, in further saying, “*All things are delivered unto Me of My Father,*” refers to God’s munificence the power which He had to communicate divine mysteries to His disciples; a power which I understand Him to have had increased in Him after the resurrection; as He shows it, saying, “*All power is given Me in heaven and on earth.*” And what I have written in a Consideration (lxxv.) and frequently elsewhere, is in conformity with this, where I state that just as God having placed all His outward light in the sun, which communicates it to us, who have the clear vision of the outward eyes, so, God having placed His Spirit in Christ with all the treasures of His divinity, who communicates it to all of us, who, by God’s favour, have clear vision of the inward eyes. But I shall better express it thus: to all of us, who, having accepted the grace of the Gospel, have purified our hearts, so that Christ can say, All this which is veiled to the wise and is revealed to the little ones, My Father has given Me, that I should hide it from the former and reveal it to the latter.

And Christ, willing to show His dignity, His divine and heavenly existence, on account of which God is so bountiful to Him, states, “*And no one has known the*

*Son*,” &c.; meaning, that it is so divine and celestial, that only the Father knows Him. And proceeding to discover His most exalted dignity, He states, “neither hath any man known the Father,” &c.; meaning, that just as the Father only knows the Son, so the Son only knows the Father. And Christ in adding, “and he to whomsoever the Son shall reveal Him,” shows that it is in His hand to give the knowledge of the Father to those to whom He wills, who alone are they who can truly say, that they know God.

As to the manner in which I understand that we know the Father by revelation of the Son, who, through Christ, know God, I remit myself to what I have stated in a Consideration (lxxxv.).

Here it might appear strange to some one that Christ said that no one has known the Father, save Himself, and those to whom it shall have pleased Him, Christ, to reveal Him; since it is so that the Jewish saints knew God by the especial favour of God; even the whole Jewish people knew God by the Holy Scriptures; and thus David says, “In Judah is God known” (Ps. lxxvi. 1); and even, according to St. Paul, the Gentiles knew Him by contemplation of the creatures.

But it will not appear strange to him, who shall consider the difference that there is between the knowledge of God which they have who know God by revelation of Christ, from that which the Gentiles, the Jews, and the Jewish saints had, considering the difference in the results; for, as to the result which the knowledge of God gained from the creatures, wrought upon the Gentiles, not from failure upon the part of God, but from their own failure, was, as stated by St. Paul (Rom. i. 21), “that they became vain in their imaginations;” whilst the result that the knowledge of God, gained from the Scriptures, wrought upon the Jewish people, not from any fault upon the part of God, but from their own fault, was that of which we read in the books of Kings, which are filled with the idolatries of that people; and the result which the know-

ledge that the Jewish saints got of God, by the favour of God, through the nature of the law, was what we read in all the holy old Testament Scriptures; it kept them in continuous fear and in continuous slavery. And the result which Christian saints get from the knowledge of God, through the revelation of Christ, from the nature of grace, is that of which we read in the epistles of our two apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul; and that which we see, to some extent, experimentally in persons truly Christian, that is, in liberating them from all fear, and filling them with all love, setting them loose from the bonds of laws and precepts, and causing them to delight in the imitation of Christ and of God Himself, whom they know as children.

And therefore their knowledge is more perfect than that of Jewish saints, and consequently than that of the Jewish nation, and than that of the Gentiles; nay, it is so that these different degrees of the knowledge of God, compared with that which Christian saints have through revelations of Christ, ought not to be called knowledge; just as the knowledge which I had of Christ and of God twenty years ago, comparing that with what I now have, I do not call it knowledge; so that Christ might well say that He only knows God, knowing Him as He is; and that they only know God, who know God, through Christ, knowing Him as the benign, merciful, and loving Father.

And therefore Christ very much to the purpose adds, "*Come unto Me, all ye that labour*," &c., as though He should say: And since it is for Me, to give the knowledge of God, in which knowledge eternal life consists, conformably with that passage, John xvii. 3, "*This is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.*" Come unto Me, all you, who, finding yourselves involved in evils, outward or inward, wish to get out of them, for I will get you out of them, and thus I will give you rest and contentment.

Where it is worthy of consideration that Christ calls none to go unto Him save those that labour and are heavy-

laden; those that are involved in outward evils, being persecuted and afflicted by men of the world; and suffering the varied forms of distress that are incident to poverty; and those who are oppressed by inward evils, recognising their wrongdoings, their rebelliousness, and their sins. For they, who do not feel themselves labouring or heavy-laden, in one or other of these modes, are not only deaf to Christ's words, but they laugh at them, for they see no need of Christ, nor even of God. Such are the rich of this world, who, depending upon their riches, think of attaining perfect happiness by them; and such are the saints of the world, who, confiding in their works, aim at attaining eternal life by them: they will both find themselves sorely deceived. Christ, proceeding to state what it is that we have to do in order to go to Him and thus find rest and repose, says, "*Take My yoke upon you,*" &c.

Where, as I have stated in my exposition of chapter vii. upon that passage, "*Enter in by the strait gate,*" I understand by "*yoke*" Christian faith, to which we have to bow the necks of our human prudence, accepting it in our hearts; and thus I understand Christ to say, *Take upon you the yoke of My preaching*, bringing yourselves to believe in the general indulgence and pardon which I preach to you; and confirm your acceptance or your faith, learning of Me the meekness and humility of heart, which you have seen in Me; esteeming Me for the mode of existence adopted by Me, that of possible and of mortal man; and thus you will come to attain the rest, which I promise you, for it will be thus and in this way that you will find true repose for your souls.

And Christ, desiring to facilitate this yet more to us, adds, "*for My yoke is easy and My burden light;*" where I understand that He calls that the burden, which He has said that we ought to learn of Him, *videlicet*, the meekness and the humility. And, as I have said upon chapter vii., and in a reply, Christ's burden is light and Christ's yoke is easy for those, who, through the gift of God, perfectly understand

wherein Christian faith consists, and wherein Christian living consists ; the yoke being for all others a rough one, and the burden a heavy one ; from the difficulty which they find in subjecting themselves to Christian faith, because it is repugnant to human prudence, and to Christian living, because it is repugnant to sensuality.

These words of Christ being thus understood, I understand that, to learn the meekness of Christ, it is necessary that we be attent to mortify and slay in us all the sallies of wrath and of anger that may assail us ; for meekness consists in a man's living amongst men like a sheep amongst wolves. I understand, moreover, that, to learn the humility of Christ, it is necessary that we mortify and slay all the affections of ambition and of self-esteem to which we are inclined ; for Christian humility consists in a man's despising himself, in holding himself to be insignificant and in self-annihilation, knowing his frailty and his wretchedness.

Men, who have outward humility, which consists in mere show, have not Christian humility ; so neither have they Christian meekness, who, but have it apparently and not in reality ; whilst they, who have Christian meekness and humility, by how much the more spiritual and the more perfect they are, so much the more meek and the more humble are they ; because so much the more do they know the very abject and the very vile plight in which they are, whilst their flesh is passible and mortal. To those, who have not attained to know this, it seems singular that Christ had humility in the heart.

I likewise understand that, in that clause "*and ye shall find rest unto your souls*," Christ responded to that which He had said, "*and I will give you rest* ;" meaning, that the rest which He gives to those, who go to Him, taking His yoke and learning of Him, meekness and humility, is inward ; for they feel peace of conscience, which is the first and principal effect of faith, and is one of the things in which the kingdom of God consists, I mean to say of

those which they enjoy, who are in the kingdom of God; in which we begin to feel that repose in the soul, which we shall feel in soul and in body after the resurrection of the just, in life eternal.

But I understand that the easiness of Christ's yoke consists in there being nothing in this life more sweet and more grateful, than for a man to feel himself pardoned by God and reconciled to God. Christ's burden is the imitation of Christ, and that which makes it light, is, that they, who have faith, are certified that it will be well with them in the life eternal; and thus becoming enamoured of it, they disregard the present life, they abhor it, and are glad to lose it; and that because mortification is one of the effects of faith, it comes to pass that, although meekness and humility, with all the other things that are associated with it, and which constitute the burden of Christ, are ordinarily oppressive, yet the mortification wrought by faith, which is the yoke of Christ to believers, makes the imitation of Christ light to them and easy to bear, because they delight to mortify and to kill all that cleaves to them of Adam.

They, who have not taken the yoke of Christ upon themselves, being without faith, hold the burden of Christ to be most oppressive and insupportable; and such it, in fact, is for flesh not mortified by faith. And therefore it is a good sign, one by which a man may know whether his faith be efficient or not, by the lightness or the weight which he feels in the burden of Christ, in the doctrine of Christian life, in the imitation of Christ. Thus, at this present time, do I understand all these words of Christ; and I think, nay, I hold it for certain, that with time I shall understand them better, for I know that, according as increased gifts of faith and of the Spirit shall be vouchsafed me, so will my peace and repose go on to increase; and I shall go on to feel the burden of Christ grow lighter; and, having greater experience of what Christ here states, I shall come to understand it better, to the glory of God, and of the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord.

## CHAPTER XII.

XII. 1-8.—At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn ; and his disciples were hungry, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day. But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did when he was hungry, and they that were with him ; how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests ? Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless ? But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple. But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.

Here it has to be considered that Christ, knowing that His disciples were hungry, took them through the corn-fields, when the ears were already ripe, in order that necessity should compel them to do that, which, without it, they would not have done ; and that, in doing so, they should give occasion for the calumny of the Pharisees and for the defence wherewith Christ defended them ; by

which they learned that the observance of the Sabbath was not to be understood as superstitiously as the Pharisees understood it, and as they taught the people to understand it.

Thus one is led to consider here the divine wisdom of Christ, the sincerity of the disciples of Christ, the superstition of the Pharisees. Christ, exonerating His disciples, in the instance of David showed them, that which is expressed in the adage, that necessity has no law. I mean that he, who, constrained by necessity, transgressed some one of the observances of the law, did not offend against God; and He thus compares the case of the disciples with that of David: as though He had said, Since David did not do wrong when he entered the house of God (thus He calls the place where the ark of the covenant was kept), and ate through necessity the loaves of bread, which it was not lawful for him to eat, so neither did His disciples do wrong, in plucking the ears of corn and in eating them on the Sabbath day, being constrained by necessity to do so.

In the instance of the priests Christ greatly discovered His divinity. He assumed that since it was lawful for the priests to work on the Sabbath in the temple, so likewise it was lawful for His disciples to work on the Sabbath, the place where *He* was being greater than the interior of the temple. And when He adds, "*but if ye had known what this means,*" He shows that because the Pharisees held sacrifice to be more agreeable to God than to succour one's neighbour, it came to pass that they did not blame the priests that, in offering sacrifices, they worked upon the Sabbath, whilst they blamed His disciples, because they plucked ears of corn on the Sabbath, not to die of hunger.

That passage, "*I will have mercy, and not sacrifice,*" is expounded in the commentary upon chapter ix. In saying "*for the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day,*" Christ concludes that even should it have been a breaking

of the Sabbath, His disciples, with His dispensation as Lord of the Sabbath, were justified in doing so. This is what I understand by these words, which, to my mind, concerned more the period in which they were spoken, than the present time.

XII. 9-21.—And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue: And behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him. And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days. Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other. Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him. But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all; and charged them that they should not make him known: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment

unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

The case of the man, who had a withered hand, is one in point against the superstitious observance of the Sabbath; an observance grasped at by the Jews, as men naturally would, who act strictly where they might act laxly, and who act laxly where they ought to act strictly: all, who have minds of a Jewish tone, act thus; they are strict in external observations, and they are lax, living licentiously and viciously; they gratify their minds by indulging in divers forms of vanity and curiosity.

From what Christ here says of the sheep, it appears that it was then lawful to do as He states; but it would not be held to be lawful by modern Jews,<sup>1</sup> who are more superstitious than were the Jews of those days: I think that this must proceed from their being more vicious; for *it ever holds true that the most vicious are the most superstitious*. The evangelist, in saying that the Pharisees held a council, consulting and devising how to kill Christ, shows how malignant and perverse they were: they could not convince Christ, either by arguments or by the scriptures, and to get rid of Him, they deliberated how they should put Him to death.

Such as these are ever they, who show themselves zealous of superstitious observances. That "*in order that it might be fulfilled*," in order to make this harmonise, it must not be referred, as some do refer it, to the words which immediately precede, but to those which preceded it a little before: "*but when Jesus knew it, He withdrew Himself from thence*," so that St. Matthew's meaning is, that Christ departed thence, not to continue to strive with and to oppose the Pharisees; and he quotes Isaiah to show that this modesty and meekness of Christ had been the subject of prophecy.

These words of Isaiah are worthy of profound considera-

<sup>1</sup> The Jews of 1530.

tion, for they adapt themselves so well to Christ, that if they had been now written, they could not adapt themselves better. In the *first* place, Isaiah, speaking in the person of God, calls Christ servant, for He took the form of a servant; and as to this, I remit myself to what I have said upon Ephesians ii. *Secondly*, he says, "*whom I have chosen*," to show His perfection. *Thirdly*, he says, "*My beloved*," to show His dignity. *Fourthly*, he says, "*in whom He is well pleased*," satisfied and gratified; "*My soul*," which echoes responsively to the Father's voice that was heard at the Jordan. *Fifthly*, he says, "*I will put My spirit upon Him*," meaning, in order that He may communicate it to others. *Sixthly*, he says, "*and He shall show judgment to the Gentiles*;" this, I think, refers to the day of judgment. *Seventhly*, he commands the meekness of Christ, saying, "*He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets*," or, He shall neither be contentious nor clamorous. *Eighthly*, he commands the modesty and innocence of Christ, saying, "*a bruised reed shall He not break*," &c., meaning, that it would be so alien to Him to do injury or harm to any one, that He would not even break a fallen reed, which is of no mortal use; nor, should He see a little flax smoke, would He quench or extinguish it. *Ninthly*, he says, that Christ would be such until the day of judgment; which is my apprehension of the words "*till He send forth judgment unto victory*," which is equivalent to His saying, until He come victorious to judgment. These words demand profound consideration, in order that one may see that Isaiah presents in these words Christ in two predicaments: one, the humblest, the meekest, and the most modest, in which He is to this day in His members, in those who by faith are incorporated into Him; and the other, the most exalted, the most glorious, and the most triumphant: of the which we have seen and do see the one, and we do hope to see the other, of which, we who believe have many evident tokens. *Tenthly*, he says, "*and in His name shall the*

*Gentiles trust,"* wherein he prophesies the call of the Gentiles to the grace of the Gospel. And thus under these ten heads does Isaiah embody the divine union between God and Christ, Christ in His humility and in His glory, and the call of the Gentiles to the Gospel; but I have already stated that St. Matthew quotes them, with the design of showing that Christ's meekness and modesty had been the subject of prophecy.

According to the Hebrew text Isaiah speaks thus: Behold My servant, I will lean upon Him, My chosen one, My soul delights in Him, I have shed forth My spirit upon Him, He shall bring forth judgment unto the Gentiles: He shall not cry, nor lift up His voice, nor shall He cause His voice to be heard in the market-place; He shall not break a bruised reed, nor shall He quench smoking flax; He shall bring forth judgment in truth; He shall not be saddened, nor discouraged, until He have established judgment upon earth, and the islands shall expect His law (Isaiah xlvi. 1-4). Where, although there is some variation made by the evangelist in his quotation, in substance there is none. In that expression, "*I shall lean upon Him,*" or, My foundation will be laid in Him, I understand that God, willing to be reconciled with men, leaned upon, abided by, and based Himself upon Christ; laying the foundation for their security, and the satisfaction of His justice, upon Christ's chastisement. In saying, "*He shall show forth judgment to the nations,*" and afterwards, "*till He send forth judgment,*" he shows that until Christ comes to judgment, the equity with which God judges is hidden, and that then it shall come to be revealed.

That expression "*He shall not be sad,*" &c., is not opposed to what we shall see further on, that Christ was sad in the garden; for then His sadness was on our account, and not on His own; had He been sad on His own account, I mean, through the knowledge of some defect in Himself, His mind might have been depressed, but, because He

grieved on our account, I mean, on account of our iniquities and sins, which He saw laid upon Himself, His mind never yielded, nor did He refrain to offer Himself to death. In saying "*the isles shall wait for His law*," he means the conversion of the Gentiles, as St. Matthew understands it, and says, "*in His name shall the Gentiles trust*," which is tantamount to, that trusting in Him, they will expect glory, immortality, and eternal life.

XII. 22-30.—Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David? But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else, how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house. He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

These three things resulted from Christ's cure of the blind and dumb demoniac. *The first*, that the multitudes, who

saw the miracle, began to think that Christ was the Messiah, promised in the law: and it is ever thus that **they**, who see something of the power of the word of God, if they are without bias, immediately begin to think well of it; and I think this to be the first impulse that there is in man, and I think so, because I experienced it myself.

*The second*, that the Pharisees discovered the malignity which they had in their minds, by persuading the multitudes that Christ was not the Messiah; stating that He wrought by a diabolic spirit; where I do not think that the Pharisees knew that Christ was indeed the Messiah, but I do think that they too had begun, as had those of the multitude, to think as to whether He were He; and they knew for certain that what He wrought, He did not work by an evil spirit; but they wished that Christ should not prove to be the Messiah; although they thought that Christ was He; they persuaded the multitudes that He was not, saying that He wrought by a diabolic spirit: and I think that their malignity consisted in this.

*The third*, that Christ confirmed what He preached, that the kingdom of heaven was already come, by its great results which they witnessed; and in order to confirm this truth, that He worked by divine power and not by diabolic power, as the Pharisees slanderously stated, Christ uses these three arguments.

*The first*, He states thus: the kingdom, the city, or the house, where there is division, always comes to ruin. Well, if there be division in the kingdom of Satan, as you think, since you say that I cast out other demons by virtue of a demon, his kingdom will come to ruin; Christ's argument being, that it is not reasonable that Satan should wish to destroy his kingdom. And here it is to be understood that Beelzebub was not the prince of all demons, but of some of them.

In the *second* argument, Christ speaks thus: if it be, as you say, that I cast out demons by virtue of Beelzebub; it will be the same with My disciples also, who are your

children; that they cast out demons by virtue of Beelzebub, for it was I who gave them authority to cast them out; it must be presupposed that the Pharisees approved of the casting out of demons by Christ's disciples as a divine act; otherwise the argument would be invalid. That "*therefore they shall be your judges,*" I understand thus: that at the day of judgment Christ will condemn the impiety of the Pharisees by the piety of the disciples, malignity by sincerity, &c.

In the *third* argument, Christ speaks thus: since it is a fact that no one can enter a brave and strong man's house, in order to rob and plunder it, unless he first take and bind him; so likewise, no one could cast demons out of human bodies, where they have got the mastery, unless he first take and conquer the prince of all the demons. Christ, in summing up this argument, says: "*He that is not with Me, is against Me,*" meaning, since I do not favour demons, nor do I assist them to wheedle, to gain over, and to collect men into their kingdom; nay, on the contrary, I thwart them, by casting them out of human bodies, breaking down and subverting their tyranny, it is clear that I am opposed to them and that I destroy them. That declaration which is in Mark ix. 40 is not contrary to this; there Christ says, "*For he that is not against us is on our part,*" for He there means, that men being naturally enemies to God, it may be said, that he who is not against Him is on His part; in St. Mark Christ spoke of Himself, whilst here He delivered a general decision, which is declared with relation to the point in question.

In this manner Christ shows how depraved the minds of the Pharisees were, in judging, or in pretending to judge, concerning Him, that He worked by diabolic agency, by an evil spirit; and He thereby confirmed what the multitudes began to think of Him, as to whether He was the Messiah, whether he was the Son of David, the promised perpetual King of the people of Israel; not of the carnal and outward, but of the spiritual and inward; over whom Christ

the son of David, reigns, and over whom He shall reign, until that He, as St. Paul says, shall deliver up the kingdom to His eternal Father.

XII. 31-37.—Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and its fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment: For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

Christ continues to censure the Pharisees, who persuaded the people that He cast out devils by diabolic arts, attributing that to Satan, which proceeded from the Holy Spirit, they speaking in opposition to their convictions. Christ says, "*All sin and blasphemy shall be pardoned*," &c., meaning, that only that sin which the Pharisees committed, being, as it was, against the Holy Spirit, was irremissible; as it is in all them, who, being Pharisees, are opposed to

the children of God, as were these to Christ. Whence considering that the sin of these Pharisees consisted in their attributing to the evil spirit what Christ wrought by the Holy Spirit; not because they believed it to be so, but because they wished that it had been so; and wished that the people should believe that it was so; do I come to understand that a man then sins against the Holy Spirit, when, with mental malignity, he persuades men that the works of the Holy Spirit are the works of the devil, he being soul-convinced of the contrary.

I understand this sin to be irremissible; because it never exists, except in men the most depraved, and obstinate in their depravity, such as were the Pharisees arrayed against Christ. They who are predestinated to life eternal never fall into this sin, for God holds them by His hand; whilst those severe words which are in Isaiah vi. 10, "*Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed,*" specially attach to those, who fall into this sin; they are quoted against them as such by all the four evangelists;<sup>1</sup> I understand St. John to call this sin, "*the sin unto death,*" (1 John v. 16), for which he would not have us pray, because they, who fall into it, are in the predicament spoken of by St. Paul (Rom. i. 28). *God has delivered them up to a reprobate mind.* Of such was Pharaoh, and of these was Saul, and the Pharisees were such, and such are all they, who walk in their steps.

"*The blasphemy of the Spirit,*" is the same as the sin of blasphemy said to be against the Holy Spirit. Christ adding, "*Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man,*" I understand as commenting upon what He has said, as though He should say, And know that this sin against the Holy Spirit is so grave, that although God will pardon men, who shall sin against Me, He will not pardon

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiii. 15; Mark iv. 12; Luke viii. 10; John xii. 40.

them that wherein they shall sin against the Holy Spirit, who works in Me.

Whence I understand that they sinned against Christ, who said of Him that He was a glutton and a tippler, a friend of publicans and sinners ; whilst they sinned against the Holy Spirit which worked in Christ, who said that He cast out devils by virtue of Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. And I understand that sin against the person of Christ was excusable, because it could spring from ignorance without malice ; men saw Christ go into such company as they knew they could not frequent without falling into depravity ; they judged evil of Christ as they judge evil of the members of Christ when they see them do what Christ did, for it is peculiar to men to judge of others by that which they judge of themselves, I mean, to judge others by what they know of themselves.

And I understand that sin against the Holy Spirit that worked in Christ was inexcusable, for it could not spring save from the most depraved minds, obstinate in depravity. Such are they, who, imitating the Pharisees, persuade the multitudes that the works which the Holy Spirit works in those, who are true members of Christ, in those, who, having taken Christ's yoke upon them, go on to imitate the inward meekness and humility of Christ, are the works of the devil ; they who say so, feeling otherwise. "*Neither in this world nor in the world to come,*" is, as I understand, equivalent to saying that it never will.

Christ subjoining, "*Either make the tree good and its fruit good,*" &c., I understand it to be His purpose to show that which we have stated, *videlicet*, that that wherein the Pharisees sinned against the Holy Spirit proceeded from the depravity they had in their minds ; and thus I understand it to be a general utterance, as though Christ should say, Would you see how bad the minds of these Pharisees are ? Look at what they say ; for it is a fact that just as a good tree produces good fruit, and the bad tree bad fruit, so likewise the good man speaks the thing that is right, and

the bad man speaks that which is wrong; so that just as the tree is known by its fruit, so the man is known by his words. Christ means by his speech, by his own words; I say this, because it frequently happens that a bad man utters good words, but they are not his own, but those of the person of whom he learned them; and when these fail him, having to utter his own, he can say nothing but what is bad.

I do not understand here that Christ, in saying "*a bad man*," comprehends all, who are not renewed by the Holy Spirit, neither do I understand that in saying "*a good man*," He comprehends but those, who are renewed by the Holy Spirit, but I understand Him to speak as a man, calling the depraved man a bad man, him, who obstinately perseveres in diabolic malignity, who interprets all the good he sees as evil; and such were the Pharisees; and calling him a good man, who has a kindly disposition, even though he should interpret the bad as good.

This apprehension pleases me, and, although it may not be wrong to understand that Christ calls all, who are without the Holy Spirit, bad men, and that He calls only those, who have the Holy Spirit, good men, yet the other apprehension of it pleases me the more, for it seems to me that it most concerns the Pharisees, telling them that even amongst men, who, as we have seen in chapter vii., are naturally inclined to evil, "*if you being evil*," &c., they were the worst, and they discovered their wickedness by persuading the people that what Christ wrought by the Holy Spirit were works of the devil, whilst they did not feel it to be so.

That epithet "*generation of vipers*," &c., is directed against the Pharisees; effectively, it seems that Christ was moved to resentment, by the blasphemy spoken against the Holy Spirit; a resentment partly felt by those, who are members of Christ, when they see that the truth of the gospel and the truth of Christian life is blasphemed; feeling no resentment when they are personally murmured

at or calumniated, for that which does not affect Christian truth. Christ, when He adds "*But I say unto you that every idle word*," &c., intends to emphasise what He has said; as though He should say, See how important it is that the heart be good, in order that the words may be good; for a reckoning will be made at the day of judgment, not only of the blasphemous and injurious words that shall have been spoken; but also of the idle ones which shall have been spoken, without a motive beyond that of occupying an idle moment.

Whence I understand that the men, who shall pretend to justify themselves by their works, will have to pass through all this rigour at the day of judgment. And by how much the more I consider this, so much the more do I know myself under obligation to my Christ, who, having incorporated me into Himself, in dying slew me, and in rising again raised me up again, and thus He exempted and liberated me from passing through this rigour; it being fact that God does not consider, neither will He consider, me, by what I am in myself, but by what I am, incorporated into Christ; by which incorporation, that is not imputed to my condemnation, which is so to men who are out of Christ; according to what St. Paul writes in Romans viii.

Christ, concluding His words inveighing against the Pharisees and against those, who are like them, says, "*For by thy words thou shalt be*," &c., meaning, that the ungodly shall be condemned at the day of judgment by his bad words, with which he shall have borne testimony to his ungodliness, malignity, and depravity; whilst the godly shall be justified at the day of judgment by his good words, wherewith he shall have borne testimony to his godliness, righteousness, and holiness; I mean that since there will be outward sentences passed, the outward reasons, justifying them, will be given too; that the bad words proceed from an ungodly mind, and that the good words proceed from a godly mind. Upon this subject I have spoken in a Consideration (xcviii.)

XII. 38-42.—Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign ; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah : For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it : because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and, behold, a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it : for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon ; and behold a greater than Solomon is here.

Christ, having spoken thus severely against the Pharisees, it seems that they and the scribes, persevering in their malignity, said to Him, "*Master, we would see a sign from Thee,*" meaning, that they were not satisfied with those which He wrought, and that they wished to see greater ones : whilst Christ, knowing that they did not ask a sign or miracle because they desired to believe, but because they believed that He could not work them, says to them, "*An evil and adulterous generation,*" &c., meaning, that He would not give them the sign that they asked ; but that He would give them a sign, which, when they saw they would not understand it, that is, His death and His resurrection.

Where it is to be understood that from the Jews having been accustomed to this, that ever when God promised them something, He gave them some sign by which they might be assured of it ; it came to pass that these asked

Christ for some palpable sign for confirmation that it was the Holy Spirit that worked in Him ; and this is conformable with what St. Paul says (1 Cor. i. 22), “ *the Jews seek signs* ;” and it ever is so, that they, who have Jewish minds, ask signs and miracles for the confirmation of the truth of the gospel ; just as they, who have Gentile minds, ask for the same confirmation, knowledge ; they wished to know, in order to believe, whilst God wills that they believe, in order to understand.

The sign or miracle, which these people demanded of Christ, I understand to have been something superlatively prodigious, which I think they would have calumniated, as they had calumniated all the others ; for their intention in demanding a miracle was not from a desire to believe, but to find that which they might calumniate, which was the intention of those, who, at the time that Christ was on the cross, said, “ *If Thou art the Son of God, come now down from the cross, and we will believe it*,” which was not to believe in Christ, but to mock Christ. And such are the purposes of all those, who ask miracles for the confirmation of evangelic truth, who all may take this reply, which Christ gave to the scribes and Pharisees for their own, saying, “ *an evil and adulterous generation*,” &c.

Where I consider that nearly that very same thing happened to these with Christ, that occurred to Ahaz with Isaiah (Isaiah vii. 1-16), for that, just as to impious Ahaz, who would not believe in the promise of God, Isaiah gave as a sign the incarnation and birth of Christ, which sign he did not understand, neither have his successors understood it, so Christ, to these who demanded of Him a sign, gave them His death and resurrection as a sign, which sign neither they understood nor have their successors understood it, so that, as the incarnation and birth of Christ was given as a sign to impious Ahaz, but he understood it not ; so to the impious scribes and Pharisees, the death and resurrection of Christ was given for a sign, but they understood it not.

And as these two signs availed nothing, save to those who accept the grace of the gospel, to whom Christ's incarnation and birth is a puissant sign, as has been stated in the first chapter, and the death and resurrection of Christ is a most puissant sign, in which He has declared Himself to be the Son of God; and because I understand the resurrection of Christ to be the most puissant, I likewise understand (why it is) that St. Paul brings it the most frequently before us in all his epistles, together with the sign of death, which are always coupled together, as Christ has here coupled them, quoting the instance of Jonah, which was as a death and resurrection borne for the salvation of the inhabitants of the city of Nineveh.

And it is to be understood that the sign of the death of Christ certifies us of our justification, conformably with that which we have frequently stated, that *God in chastising our sins in Christ, did not less purpose to secure us, than to satisfy His justice*; whilst the sign of Christ's resurrection certifies us of our glorification; but after that we have accepted the general indulgence and pardon, and that we, through it, hold ourselves to be reconciled with God; for that previously, these signs are no more to us, than they were to the scribes and Pharisees, and to those, who are like them.

As to the three days and nights, I hold it to be certain that those which Christ went through were peculiarly similar to those which Jonah experienced; and I say that had I known what was Jonah's experience, I should have known Christ's, but that not knowing the one I do not care to set myself the task of verifying the other, contenting myself with the knowledge that the one was like the other. With relation to Jonah's sign, Christ goes on to say that at the day of judgment the Ninevites will condemn the Jews, meaning that the conversion of the Ninevites by Jonah's preaching will condemn the obstinacy of the Jews, who, having Christ's presence in their midst, His excellence far transcending Jonah's, they did not what the Ninevites did.

The same sense holds in what Christ says of the Queen of the South, or Shebah; and here two things are to be understood: *the one*, the mode in which the saints of God will judge and condemn the saints of the world, and the men of the world at the day of judgment; and *the other*, that there will be an universal resurrection of the bad and of the good. Where if it shall appear strange to some one, that they, who have never known Christ, nor believed in Christ, have to be raised with Christ, I will tell him to consider *that* in Christ's obedience which he considers in Adam's disobedience, and that he ponder that just as in Adam's disobedience we all have been disobedient, and therefore have all been condemned to eternal death, as rebels and enemies to God, from which condemnation we, who believe in Christ, are free; for although we die, yet in due time we resuscitate to live for ever; so in Christ's obedience we all have been obedient, and for that reason habilitated for life eternal, as being reconciled to God, and friends of God; from which habilitation they are excluded, who do not believe in Christ, for, although they shall in due time resuscitate, they shall not live for ever, so that none will enjoy the habilitation to life eternal, but those, who embrace the grace of the gospel, who shall hold it to be sure and certain that just as they disobeyed in Adam, so have they obeyed in Christ, and that thus they are obedient in Christ, righteous in Christ, and holy in Christ. All the others will indeed be resuscitated, not to eternal life, but to eternal death. And he that shall desire to make himself perfectly master of this consideration, which is most important, let him read St. Paul's fifth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, praying to God to give him the right apprehension of what he will read. And upon this I have written a Consideration (cviii.)

XII. 43-45.—When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through waterless places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will

return into my house from whence I came out ; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there : and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

Had I known the natural condition of these unclean spirits of whom Christ here speaks, I should be able to tell why the one that comes forth out of a man goes through places without water, and I should be able to tell how he finds the man, out of whom he came forth, vacant, swept, and decorated, and what spirits they are who are worse than him, and so of all the rest, that one desires to know here ; but as I do not know it, so neither can I say anything of this other, not understanding either one or the other. I understand right well that Christ's purpose is to say that *that* was about to befall the Jews, which befell the man out of whom the evil spirit came forth ; for that, just as it would have been less evil to the man had the devil not gone forth out of him, since he returns with seven spirits worse than himself ; so it would have been less evil to them had Christ not come amongst them, nor wrought the miracles which He wrought, nor preached that which He preached, nor taught that which He taught, since, remaining in their unbelief, or rather hardening themselves in it, they became every day worse ; this is what He calls the last state being worse than the first. In that expression "*seven spirits*," I understand a finite number for an infinite. And that, "*so shall it be also*," is to be understood, not as to the spirit, but as to the man. It is important to consider these modes of speaking in all the similes which Christ institutes.

XII. 46-50.—While he yet talked to the people,

behold his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

By these words of Christ we learn that the true Christian, who, regenerated by Christ, has ceased to be a child of Adam and has become a child of God, converts and settles all his love and all his affection, which before regeneration he had for his parents, brothers, and relatives, upon those, whom he knows to be similarly regenerated; whom he loves and cares even more for than parents, than brothers, and than relatives, because the bond of Christian regeneration is stronger than that of human generation (birth). Where I understand it to be a most excellent token for a man, whereby to certify himself of his Christian regeneration, that he finds himself more attached to those, who become, by Christian regeneration, his father, mother, brothers, and children, than to those, who are his father, mother, brothers, and children by human generation. Those, who do not gratefully experience this attachment, only experiencing that which is of human generation, may rest certain that they have not entered upon Christian regeneration; and, if they should desire to enter upon it, let them pray to God, with great faith and with great importunity, that He may plant them in it.

Hence it is to be understood that the Christian's concern in the present life is to maintain the decorum, and to meet the obligation of Christian regeneration; not in order

to be a Christian, but because he is a Christian ; and this obligation consists in accepting Christian faith and in devoting himself to Christian life, because to do this, is to do the will of God, for this is what God requires of us.

It imports but little to know what it was that Christ's mother and brothers desired to say to Him ; but it is of great importance, to consider that those words of Christ "*Who is My mother ?*" show some resentment, as though Christ resented that He should have been called away to the obligation of human generation, He being occupied, as one might say, in the obligation of Christian regeneration. Where it is not to be understood by these words that Christ meant that His mother, nor that even His brothers, did not do the will of God, as His disciples did it, but that Christ spoke in response to him, who delivered the message, for I mean to say that Christ knew its tendency was to drag Him away, as it were, from the obligation of Christian regeneration to the obligation of human generation ; Christ replied to him conformably to its tendency, meaning, I hold as mother and as brothers, but those, who do the will of My Father.

The Jews call first cousins, the children of brothers, brothers, and so they commonly call other relatives. In saying "*seeking*," he means endeavouring. In saying "*standing without*," he means, outside the house wherein Christ was.

## CHAPTER XIII.

XIII. 1-23.—The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the seaside. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went on board a boat, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow: and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the birds came and devoured them up. Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them. But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I

to them in parables; because they seeing, see not, and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, “ By hearing ye shall hear, and “ shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and “ shall not perceive: For this people’s heart is waxed “ gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their “ eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should “ see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and “ should understand with their heart, and should be “ converted, and I should heal them.” But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them. Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the wayside. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it: yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he that received seed into the good ground, is he that heareth the word,

and understandeth it; who also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Here Christ begins to speak by parables, by comparisons, or similitudes. There is no occasion for us to occupy ourselves, by surmises, as to His motive for speaking thus, since Christ, Himself, being asked by the disciples, declares it, saying, "*For this reason spake I to them in parables, because they seeing, see not,*" &c.

Christ's purpose in this parable of the sower is to show that of those, who hear the gospel preached, who admit it and receive it, only they retain it, so that it is effectual in them, who are the good soil; whence I understand that they are good soil, who, being predestinated to life eternal, are endowed with such a good nature, with such a natural disposition, that hearing the word of the gospel, they embrace it and inwardly retain it; so that this goodness is through the gift of God, who has given them that good disposition, having predestinated them to eternal life, amongst whom the word of the gospel falls, like seed that falls upon good ground, but (that is so only) when he that speaks the word is inspired to speak it, for then that word is the word of God; because the mouth of that man who utters it, is the mouth of God, and not of man: St. Paul understood it thus, in Romans x. 17, where, having stated "*that faith is from hearing,*" &c., he added, "*and the hearing by the word of God,*" meaning, that to believe, it is necessary to hear, and that what is heard be spoken by divine inspiration; so that for the word of God to be effectual in any one, he must needs be the good soil, prepared by God Himself; and that the word, which he hears, proceed from the mouth of God, he who utters it being inspired to speak it, and that God with it touch the heart of the person hearing it.

Christ's meaning, then, throughout this parable, is, that the apostle's experience, who goes forth to proclaim to

men the reconciliation, which God hath wrought with them, through Christ, in pardoning them their sins, is the same with the sower, who goes forth to sow; for that, just as the sower, in sprinkling his seed, loses three-fourths, because it falls in unsuitable places for fructification, so the apostle, in proclaiming the gospel, loses three-fourths, because it falls on men, who, not being predestinated to life eternal, are not adapted to the reception of the gospel, so that it can be effectual in them; and for that, just as the sower gets much fruit from one-fourth of his seed, corresponding to the greater or less fertility of the soil whereon it falls; so the apostle gets much fruit from the fourth part of his proclamation of the gospel, because it fructifies, more or less, according as they are, more or less disposed for it, who accept it, in that disposition which God has given them. Which appears natural, for they have it before they embrace the gospel, but I understand this to be nothing other than supernatural, God having given them it, in order that they should embrace the gospel, and because they had to embrace it.

Those words, "*He that hath ears to hear, let him hear,*" are worthy of great consideration whenever Christ speaks them, for by them He invites us, that we be attentive to understand what He says. And it is very necessary that a man attentively understand this parable, in order that he understand that of the four-fourths of men who hear the proclamation of the gospel, only one-fourth receives it so, that the gospel bears fruit in them; if a man find himself bearing evangelic fruit, let him thank God for it, and if he find himself not bearing fruit, let him pray to God to grant him grace to do so, and in the meanwhile let him attend to get rid of, and to separate himself from those things, which prevent the gospel from bearing fruit in those who receive it; such are subjection to the bad spirit, whom Christ calls the evil one; the instability and levity with which they stumble and fall in tribulations and persecutions, which present themselves to those, who

accept the gospel; those of them who are easily moved by things and the care of things of this present life, and by the world's respect. And here a reply which I wrote to a question (xxi.) setting forth the reason why Christ says that no one can be His disciple who does not abhor father, mother, &c., would come in appositely.

That statement, "*For to him that hath shall be given,*" &c., I understand thus: That to them, who, being good soil, in whom the grace of the gospel fructifies, never severing themselves from it, neither by the persuasions of the devil, nor by the persecutions of the world, nor by the cares of outward things, nay, drawing others to it, this moreover shall be given to them, that the mysteries of the kingdom of God shall be revealed to them, with other graces and other favours from God, wherewith they shall be increased; whilst that to them, in whom, not being good soil, the grace of the gospel shall not fructify, that little that they shall understand shall be taken from them, that which they shall have heard and not understood. And Christ, coming to the point upon which His disciples had questioned Him, says, "*For this reason do I speak to them in parables,*" declaring that the cause why He spoke to the multitudes in parables was on account of their malignity and depravity, in which they were so held, that seeing they did not see, and hearing they did not hear, nor did they understand; and that thus was fulfilled in them what Isaiah says in chapter vi., "*By hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand,*" &c.

The meaning of these words, according to this quotation, in which the evangelist follows the Greek translation, (the Septuagint), which was then more used amongst them for whom he wrote, I understand to be this, that the minds of the Jews were so hardened and so obstinate that they would not understand the truth in order to be converted to God, and thus to obtain mercy and salvation. The words of the prophet, according to the Hebrew text, in which tongue it appears that Christ spoke, or in the

Syriac, which was almost the same, run thus: “*And God said*, Go and say to this people, Hearing, hear, but understand not; and seeing, see, but know not: the heart of this people make it dull, and make their ears heavy, and their eyes blind: lest peradventure it see with its eyes, and hear with its ears, and understand with its heart, and be converted and be healed.”

Whence, by the words that precede and by those which follow, it appears that God commanded Isaiah that he should speak those words to the Jews, “*hearing, hear*,” &c., which apparently involve malediction; nay, I understand their effect to be as follows: make dull and obstinate their heart; as though God should say to Isaiah, Make the hearts of this rebellious and perverse people stupid, obstinate, and hardened; make their ears heavy, and blind their eyes, that it may not come to pass that their eyes having the ability to see, their ears that of hearing, and their heart that of understanding, it repent and convert itself, and thus that I should have to heal it. Where three things worthy of being considered present themselves. The *first*, that ungodly men, whenever they hear those words of Isaiah, “*Hear, but in hearing do not understand*,” &c., they become more obstinate and more hardened in their ungodliness, it working in them that peculiar effect, for which God spoke to them by Isaiah, because they have made up their minds to hold God to be unjust and cruel. The *second* is, that just as the words which are spoken by God to them, who are the good soil, soften and soothe them, so to those, who are bad soil, they harden and petrify them; and here it is apt to illustrate with a comparison deduced from the action of the sun, which softens and melts wax, whilst it hardens clay and makes it dry. The *third*, that it is the work of God, that they, who are ungodly and rebellious, obstinate in their rebellion and in their ungodliness, become even more hardened and more obstinate; God does not will that such persons attain salvation in any way, and to these

that passage of St. Paul is peculiarly applicable: “*God hath delivered them up to a reprobate mind*” (Rom. i. 28).

Where if human prudence shall object, saying that God is unjust; it shall be answered that it is blind, since it does not see that men depart from and rebel against God, before that God sends and visits them with this chastisement; and if the flesh shall complain, saying that God is cruel, in shutting up the way of salvation to those whom He hardens and delivers over to a reprobate sense; it shall be told that it is rash in imposing law upon God; and that it is ignorant, not considering that all God’s works are tempered by mercy; there not being cruelty in any one of them; cruelty being as alien to God as it is natural to man, as is clearly seen in the fourth chapter of Jonah.

But reverting to Christ’s words, I understand that He quoted the prophecy of Isaiah to show His disciples, that that occurred to those multitudes, which had been prophesied by Isaiah: and I understand that when Christ added, “*But blessed are your eyes for they see*,” &c., He means, the eyes and ears of these are unfortunate, for they neither see nor hear, whilst your eyes and ears are blessed, because they see and hear. And what He subjoins, “*for I tell you of a truth*,” &c., is worthy of great consideration, for the confirmation of what is stated in chapter xi., showing how much greater is the dignity of the saints of the gospel, than that of the saints under the law; since it appears from these words, that they of the gospel enjoyed, what they of the law desired to enjoy, just as the saints, who are with Christ, enjoy that, which those, who are still living, desire to enjoy.

Here this occurs to me, that if the disciples of Christ had had the Holy Spirit, which they afterwards had, to know Christ and to enjoy the vision of Christ, and the conversation of Christ, whilst He lived amongst them, their happiness and their contentment would have been such, that they could not have borne such felicity, for that their flesh was passible and mortal. And herein I

understand one of the reasons why God ordained that Christ should not be perfectly known, until that He had ascended into heaven. Where He says "*Some a hundred, and some sixty,*" &c., He means, that one portion of the seed yielded a hundredfold, whilst another yielded sixtyfold. For that which He here says, "*Because they seeing, see not,*" &c., is reported by St. Mark, that they in seeing, may not see; and this agrees better with the words of Isaiah, as though Christ should say: I speak to them in parables, because I do not will that they should understand Me.

This reason seems strange to human prudence, and it says to Christ, if it be not Thy will that they understand Thee, why dost Thou speak to them? And Christ might answer, in order; as Son of God, to justify the wisdom of God, as they all do justify it, who are the children of God, so that nothing may remain to exculpate men of the world. And because the task would be a hard one were I to attempt to justify this work of God, I remit myself to that exclamation of St. Paul's: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi. 33).

In saying "*The word of the kingdom,*" I understand what He said to be, "*the kingdom of heaven is near at hand.*" In saying, "*He dureth but for a while,*" Christ means that he is inconstant, that he entertains it but for the moment, and this is what the Greek word signifies. In saying "*By and by he is offended,*" He means, that as soon as the man is persecuted, he doubts; and, in doubting, he departs from the faith, stumbling at persecution. And here I will say this, that I do not feel fully assured in relation to any, who accept the grace of the gospel, believing in reconciliation with God, until I see that they are stable, firm, and constant under persecutions. Where Christ says "*the deceitfulness,*" it might be said "*the leading astray,*" because riches divert and cause the man to deviate from the right way.

XIII. 24-30.—Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

This parable being expounded by Christ Himself, as we shall presently see (37-43 verses), it is better that we abide by His exposition, and proceed to these other parables.

XIII. 31, 32.—Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

Christ means that just as the grain of mustard seed, which is the least of all that are sown, being sown, goes on to increase in size until it becomes a large tree; so the kingdom of heaven, being, in this present life, the meanest and the most despised of all things that are taught, it, when preached, goes on to increase in size, in numbering more persons, and, in character, giving greater perfection to those who are comprehended in it; until that, manifesting its importance in the life eternal, it will be seen that it transcends all the kingdoms of the world, which, in this present life, are great and illustrious.

This is the proper application of the parable, where there is no occasion to insist upon the birds building their nests, since it appears that Christ only mentions it as an incident, indicative of the greatness of the tree; and as I have stated, our attention should only be directed to Christ's principal intention in them.

XIII. 33.—Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

Christ suggests by this parable that there comes to pass in the kingdom of heaven that which occurs to leaven and dough; for that just as a little leaven has such power that it suffices to leaven a great mass of dough, so the preaching of the kingdom of heaven, which, in the eyes of the world, is insignificant and vile, is of such power that it suffices to justify, to mortify, to vivify, and to glorify all who are the people of God, predestinated to life eternal; so that Christ's purpose in this parable is to show the power of preaching the kingdom of heaven, the power of the kingdom itself. In saying "*three measures*," He means a great mass of dough.

XIII. 34, 35.—All these things spake Jesus

unto the multitude in parables ; and without a parable spake he not unto them : That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables ; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

St. Matthew means, that by Christ's speaking in parables, that came to be fulfilled which is written : "I will open my mouth in a parable ; I will utter dark sayings of old" (Ps. lxxviii. 2). As to the sense of that verse, I remit myself to what I have stated upon that psalm.

XIII. 36-43.—Then Jesus sent the multitudes away, and went into the house ; and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man ; The field is the world ; the good seed are the children of the kingdom ; but the tares are the children of the wicked one ; The enemy that sowed them is the devil ; the harvest is the end of the world ; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire ; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity ; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire ; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

This exposition of the parable of the tares ought alone fully to satisfy us to make up our minds not to labour to

make the other parables square in all and everything, with that which is understood to be by them ; since we see that Christ, in expounding the parable which He Himself had spoken, left some things in it without application in His exposition, as, for instance, that "*whilst men slept*" and *their wish to go and pull up the tares*," &c.

Christ's purpose in the parable of the tares, as it appears by this His exposition, is to show, that although in the present life there are false Christians, who are the children of the devil, amongst true Christians, who are the children of the kingdom, for it belongs to them, at the day of judgment the false Christians shall be cast into hell, whilst the true ones shall be glorified : so that this parable is like a menace to false Christians, and like a consolation for true Christians, who, in the present life, are censured, persecuted, and maltreated by false Christians.

That expression "*The good seed*" is, as in other parables, used interchangeably for the fruit of the seed, which Christ has sown and sows in the world, whence spring the true Christians ; just as the fruit of the seed, which the devil has sown and sows in the world, are the false Christians : so that Christ is the sower, who sows by the agency of His apostles ; whilst the field is mankind ; and the seed is the intimation through the gospel of the reconciliation of men with God ; and the fruit of this seed are the true Christians ; the enemy is the devil ; and the tares which he sows are the false opinions, which are contrary to Christian faith ; and the false doctrines, which are opposed to the doctrine of Christian life ; the fruit of the tares are false Christians, who, at the day of judgment, when Christ, the sower, shall come with His angels to get in the fruit of His preaching, shall be cast into the fire of hell.

"*Where there shall be wailing*," &c., He means, there they shall be in consummate misery, whilst the true Christians shall then be glorified, and occupy a position very like to that in which Christ was seen after His resurrection, and

to that, in which Christ was seen by the three disciples at Mount Tabor; I understand this thus, because He also says here, then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, as it is stated there, that Christ's presence shone forth as the sun.

"*All the things that offend,*" is tantamount to all scandals, obstacles and impediments; Christ calls false Christians such, for these are they, who molest and afflict true Christians; and shows that these are amongst the children of God, what tares are amongst wheat.

Here it might be added that the sower's labourers, who, by sleeping, gave the enemy the opportunity to sow the tares, are they, who have it in charge to preach the gospel and to teach Christian life; and that their sleep is their negligence; and that the tares come to be visible amongst the wheat, when they, who receive false opinions and false doctrines, begin to resist those, who hold the true faith and the true doctrine. And it might likewise be added that the labourers show their indiscretion and even their imperfection and want of charity, in wishing to remedy their negligence, by collecting the tares, by separating those, who hold false opinions and false doctrines, from those, who hold the true faith and the true doctrine; and that the Lord shows His prudence, His goodness, and His charity, by not consenting to their doing so; on account of the inconvenience which would incidentally follow there-upon; and that in saying, "*Let both grow together,*" &c., Christ purposes to take away the jurisdiction of judging between the wheat and the tares; nay, this is most certain, that had Christ not expounded His parable, we might think that His intention throughout it was this.

And when I consider this, I am ashamed of myself, when I reflect, in how many things I may have deceived myself in these expositions: effectively, how very great is our ignorance, whilst our temerity is much greater still, when we presume to account for everything, and assume that we always succeed in doing so. I say then, that all

this might well be said, but I do not think that Christ contemplated it; as well because I do not see that He has declared it, having declared the other; as also, because I see in chapter xviii., that Christ wills that he, who having been corrected, does not mend, be held for the fruit of the tare; and because I likewise see that St. Paul separated the tares from the wheat, excommunicating some and publishing the faults of others, in order that they should not spoil the good seed, which he, as Christ's apostle, sowed; I mean to say the good seed which sprang from what he sowed.

XIII. 44.—Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

Christ's meaning is, that the experience of those, who, by acceptance of the grace of the gospel, find themselves in the kingdom of heaven, is like that of a man, who casually finds treasure hid in a field upon an estate; for that just as this man, as soon as he finds the treasure in the field, very joyously sells all that he has, and buys that estate, in order to get possession of that treasure; so he, who, having accepted the grace of the gospel, finds himself in the kingdom of God, very joyously sells all that he has, stripping himself of everything which, as a child of Adam, he possesses, abhorring it all and renouncing it all, in order to be able thoroughly to enjoy the happiness of the kingdom of God; of the rule and government of the Holy Spirit, by which they are ruled and governed, who, being the children of God, are in the kingdom of God, in order to maintain themselves in the possession of the kingdom, which, by accepting the grace of the gospel, they have taken. Effectively all true Christians have the experience of this parable, and by it we are admonished that

to enjoy the kingdom of God, and to maintain ourselves in possession, we must needs sell all that we have, renouncing all our human prudence, our natural light, and our knowledge of good and evil, and mortifying all our affections and all our appetites, to which, as children of Adam, we are inclined.

And here it has to be observed that just as this comparison does not agree in the hiding of the treasure until the purchase of the estate, for we do not hide the kingdom until the purchase has been made; so neither does it agree as to the purchase; for we have seen in chapter xi. that the kingdom is not bought, for it is not for sale; on the contrary, it is taken by force; and if it had been for sale, no one would have enjoyed it, for there could have been no equivalent price paid, even had one person had all, that all the men in the world have; and had he been able to do himself all the violence, that all the men in the world can do themselves; so that the parable may agree in that one treasure be like the other; and that the man finds one as he does the other, without seeking for it; and that the one like the other be enjoyed; and that he gives all that he has for the enjoyment of one treasure, so likewise for the other.

And the most remarkable thing here is this, that just as he who finds the treasure in the field, finds it, as one might say, fortuitously, not seeking for it; so he who finds the treasure of the kingdom of God, finds it, as one might say, fortuitously, not seeking for it; and effectively, it is so, that all who have found the treasure of the kingdom of God, say and confess that they had never thought of finding such a thing, nor had ever imagined such a thing, so that the quotation which St. Paul makes, taken from Isaiah, is verified in them, "*I was found of them that sought me not*" (Rom. x. 20; Isa. lxv. 1), so that they too know, by experience, that to be truth, which St. Paul himself quotes from Isaiah himself, "*what eye hath never seen,*" &c. (1 Cor. ii. 9; Isa. lxiv. 4).

XIII. 45, 46.—Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

Here we ought to notice the manner in which Christ was wont to compare; for that, wishing to state that a precious stone (pearl) of great value was like the kingdom of heaven, and that every one of those, who, by accepting the grace of the gospel, enter into the kingdom of heaven, is like a merchant, He says that the kingdom is like a merchant. This observation is of great importance for the comprehension of these comparisons. And I understand Christ's intention in this to be the same as that in the last, to show how precious is the kingdom of heaven, and how much it is esteemed by those who find it; by those, whom God of His grace plants in it; in order that we all may be enamoured of it, that we may desire it, and desiring it, that we pray God to place us in it. So that this parable may agree in this, that he, who seeks the kingdom of God, does not care for anything else, nay, he renounces everything and postpones them to revel at his ease in the kingdom; just as the merchant, who finds the precious stone, does not care to look for others, contenting himself with that only, and giving all that he has for it.

III. 47-50.—Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just; and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

The sea is this present life: the fishermen are the apostles, as we have seen in chapter iv.; the net, which they cast, is the gospel they preach, which is identical with the kingdom of heaven; the fish, that are caught in this net, are they, who accept the grace of the gospel; those, who do not accept it, remaining outside the net, are outside of the kingdom and thus of the Christian Church. And amongst those who accept it, for all do not accept it, by the gift of God, by the Holy Spirit, there are some, who accept it by man's persuasion, others through fear, and others by temperament, Christ means, that, although in the present life, they will be in the net, they will be in the kingdom, enjoying that which they can enjoy in the present life, in company with those, who by the gift of God and by the Holy Spirit, accept the grace of the gospel; but at the day of judgment, when they both shall be raised up, the good shall enter into life eternal, whilst the bad shall go into eternal fire, of which [judgment] Christ says the angels shall be the executioners. I understand the design of this parable to be almost the same as the parable of the tares.

XIII. 51, 52.—Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord. Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe, who is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man who is a householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

It would appear, that Christ, desiring that His disciples should have all this which He had spoken, well impressed upon their minds, asked them, whether they had understood it all; and I understand that they answering said, that they had understood it; He wished to show them what the kingdom of heaven, such as He had depicted it

to them, was, comparing it to the grain of mustard seed, to leaven, to treasure, to a merchant-man, &c., the result is this, that the educated man, having learned the things affecting the kingdom of heaven, is as free in communicating what he has learned, as is a host, who sets before his friends all that he has in the house, without keeping back anything from them.

Whence I consider the difference between those, who are educated in the kingdom of the world, and those, who are educated in the kingdom of heaven ; in that these, as Christ here says, are very liberal, whilst those are very pinching ; these communicate all that they have, and had they more, they would communicate more ; whilst the others keep back what they have, and it grieves them to communicate it, unless prompted by self-interest. I understand this to proceed from the fact, that they, who are of the kingdom of heaven, having learned without any effort or labour of their own, are liberal of that which costs them little ; whilst they of the kingdom of the world, having learned by effort and with labour, sell dearly that which they paid for dearly, it likewise proceeds from the fact, that they of the kingdom of heaven, as they learn of a master, who has ever some new things to teach, they never fear that they shall fall short of them, and they bring forth all that they have ; whilst those of the kingdom of the world, as they learn from men and from books, that can only teach that whereunto they have attained ; they fear lest their stock should be exhausted, and that thus they should have no more to teach ; and moreover, that they of the kingdom of heaven, learning from God, who is most liberal ; they learn, amongst other things, liberality ; whilst they of the kingdom of the world, learning from men of the world, who are most avaricious ; they learn, amongst other things, avarice.

That which Christ says, “ *Therefore every scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven is,* ” &c., refers to what immediately precedes, and designs to convey this meaning :

because you understand all this, “*the scribe instructed*,” &c. I refer it to all that has been said above, and I understand Christ to say: forasmuch as the kingdom of heaven is precisely that which I have depicted it; it is so, that they, who have been disciples in it, are already instructed by it; they are like the master of the house in point of liberality, &c. The “*scribe instructed*,” is the same as one educated, who has learned, and the Greek text has this meaning. “*By new and old*,” He means everything.

XIII. 53-58.—And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence. And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, in so much that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter’s son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house. And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

Here the perversity of the human mind is worthy of consideration, which, not being able to calumniate the words, nor to censure the life of Christ, it calumniates and it censures the meanness of His person and of His descent. These men were constrained by Christ’s words and works to form the highest opinion of Him; but in order not to hold it, they stumbled and fell at the meanness of His parents and of His relatives; as effectively

they all stumble, for they, who are like these, ever do so, in connection with things, which members of Christ have, who amongst other men are regarded as despicable and vulgar; and it is so that when they see in them more than they see in others, in order not to recognise that there is anything supernatural or divine in them, they set themselves to seek out what there is in them that is mean and low. Whence members of Christ ought to rejoice and be glad, considering that the world looks down upon them, just as it looked down upon Christ; whilst men of the world, when they stumble and are scandalised by the lowliness and want of education of members of Christ, ought to feel sad, by considering that they do as the Jews did. Where it is said, "*He taught them,*" it is to be understood, of His own countrymen. For miracles the Greek text says "*mighty acts.*" By that expression, "*Is not this the carpenter's son?*" it is to be considered that Christ was always held to be the son of Joseph.

As to the brothers and sisters, it has been already stated that the Jews call their male and female relatives so. That; "*they were offended in Him,*" is tantamount to their saying, that they stumbled at Him, at the meanness of His birth, according to the flesh, not recognising His greatness according to the Spirit. That which Christ stated, "*That a prophet is not without honour,*" &c., is always so, and is constantly seen to be so experimentally, that men think lightly of those to whom they are nearest related. In stating that He did not work many miracles in His own country on account of the unbelief of its inhabitants, St. Matthew shows that the faith of those among whom the miracles are wrought is to a great extent the reason why they were wrought; being so for the confirmation of the faith of believers. Whence it might be said that Christ does not work many miracles nowadays on account of our unbelief.

## CHAPTER XIV.

XIV. 1-12.—At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus; and said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him. For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife. For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her. And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet. But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod. Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John the Baptist's head in a charger. And the king was sorry: nevertheless, for the oath's sake, and that of them who sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her. And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison. And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother. And his disciples came and took up the body, and buried it; and they went and told Jesus.

From the false notion that Herod formed of Christ, in believing Him to be St. John the Baptist, St. Matthew takes occasion to relate the history of St. John's death; wherein I consider two things. *The one*, that God employs His servants to do the work He requires of them, and afterwards cuts them off by temporal death, in order to confer eternal life upon them; He did so with St. John: He employed him to testify of Christ, and afterwards allowed Herod to decapitate him. And here I learn that Christians ought not to be saddened, either by their own premature deaths, nor by those of other Christians, when they consider that God has already employed them, in the doing of that which He required of them. *And the other*, that we Christians ought never to regard what kind of death we die, provided that the will of God be accomplished in us; remembering that death with us is but an affair of time, our life being eternal.

As to the reason why God ordained that St. John should die before Christ, and by such an out-of-the-way and secret death as he died, I should think that *the first* was in order that the people should not be divided, some following after Christ and others after St. John, who, it appears, was not to follow Christ in social life, he having commenced life so roughly and hardly: whilst *the second* was in order that St. John should not be like Christ in anything, in order, too, that none of the prophecies written concerning Christ should in any way agree in him: but I remit myself in what affects either the one or the other to judgment that is more spiritual than mine.

And as to the other things which may be considered as involved in this history, I remit myself to what others write. In saying, "*And therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him*," I think this to be tantamount to his saying: and for this reason he works miracles: the evangelists frequently call miracles mighty acts. And I will not contend with him, who shall affirm, that the supernatural powers by which St. John wrought miracles,

proceeded from his having been raised from the dead. Herod's fête day is the same as Herod's birthday. Where he says, "*the guests*," the Greek word signifies those who were seated at table with him at the banquet.

XIV. 13-21.—When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by boat into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities. And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick. And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. He said, Bring them hither to me. And he commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass; and took the five loaves and the two fishes, and, looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake; and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitudes. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.

St. Matthew reports that when Christ knew of St. John the Baptist's death, He left that district where He was, and went in a boat to a desert place; and that, when the multitudes knew that He had gone there, they left their towns, and followed Him on foot. And he says, that when Christ came forth from that solitary place to which

He had gone, that seeing how numerous they were who followed Him, He commiserated them; and that He healed those of them who were sick. And he then narrates that Christ fed them all miraculously; by doing which, I understand that He has confirmed and does confirm the faith of His disciples, showing them how mighty He is to fulfil what He has stated in chapter vi., where He promised to all those, who sought the kingdom of God and His righteousness, these outward things additionally.

Where every one of Christ's disciples may consider, and say; since it is a fact that Christ manifested His power to feed such a multitude, out of the course of nature, who merely followed Him from human promptings; it will likewise prove fact that He will show His power in providing me with food, without anxiety on my part, who follow Him by Christian promptings. And it will not be to the point for any one to say, how do I know that I follow Christ from Christian promptings? for it concerns every one that follows Christ to be assured that he follows Christ from Christian promptings; and that Christ will fulfil to him what He promises. I find two things for consideration in the conversation between Christ and the disciples. *The one*, the little confidence they had in the person of Christ, having witnessed the great things which He had done. And I exonerate the disciples, when I recollect the little confidence which the Jewish host had in God when in the desert, having witnessed greater things: and I exonerate both, by the infidelity and unbelief of the human mind, which brings itself with the greatest difficulty to place confidence in God, and in those who are God's; nay, it is such, that they can in no way bring themselves to believe, unless God Himself bring them to it. None feel this infidelity and unbelief, save those, who, through God's grace, are being delivered from it.

The *other thing*, which I consider, is the patience with which Christ tolerated the unbelief of the disciples; and how He proceeded to induce them to belief, and that they

should believe in Him. "In saying *The hour is now past*," they meant for them to return home. That expression, "*And looking up to heaven*," &c., is worthy of consideration, for it appears that Christ did the same when performing this miracle, which He did at the institution of the Holy Eucharist, as to the looking up into heaven; the benediction and the distribution. What the benediction involved is unknown. The baskets of broken bits or fragments render the miracle more evident; since, had they eaten nothing, it was miraculous to gather so many fragments from five loaves. And yet with all this, there is no remedy to bring us to forget personal anxiety, and to bring us to cast our cares upon God, to forget self in what concerns the present life, and to be careful in what concerns the life eternal, assured that God will take care of us, as it appears, that He has cared for those, who have followed Him and walked in His ways. Effectively, faith encounters the greatest contradiction in our own minds. Let us pray to God that He may wholly remove it, in order that we may wholly confide in Him.

XIV. 22-36.—And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a boat, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. But the boat was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the boat, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid ; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me ! And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt ? And when they were come into the boat, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the boat came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God. And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret. And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased : And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment : and as many as touched were made whole.

Christ's design, in sending His disciples away before Him, is understood by what resulted from their going; it is, that they, seeing themselves in danger, were afraid, and that recurring to Christ, they were delivered from danger, and they thus found fresh cause why to distrust themselves, and to trust in Christ, confiding in His words; and it very clearly appears, that all Christ's design was to bring His disciples to believe, and that they should not doubt what He promised them. And I understand that in giving them assurance in these outward things, as in this danger and in their preceding necessity, He purposed two things: *the one*, that they should lose solicitude as to things of the present life, and that they should wholly

transfer it to things of the life eternal: and *the other*, that, by what they saw wrought by Christ with them and for them, in these outward things, they might certify themselves of the remission of sins and of reconciliation with God, which are inward things. And here we learn what fruit we Christians have to realise from the external and bodily favours that we daily receive from God.

What follows is involved in this history: in *the first* place, that although all the Christian's life ought to be one continuous prayer, one continuous desire for the glory of God, at times it is right for the Christian to set apart a season for prayer, which must be in seclusion, in order that the mind may be more absorbed in God, as did Christ, who withdrew Himself, in order to pray alone. *Secondly*, that, although God may indeed consent that His people be tempted; He at times bringing them under trial, as it appears that Christ here brought His disciples; He does not consent that they perish under trial, nay, at the right time, He succours them, even without their call to Him for help, bringing Himself before them, in order to remind them to recur to Him, as did Christ here with His disciples.

*Thirdly*, that man, when moved by fear, forms strange conceptions of God: some hold Him to be inhuman, others to be cruel, others to be niggardly, &c., as did the disciples of Christ, who being afraid, saw Christ and thought that He was an apparition. *Fourthly*, that God succours His own people even when they recur to Him, under fear and at their wits' end, such is the desire which He has, to show us the love He has for us, as did Christ here with His disciples, who called on Him, being alarmed. *Fifthly*, that so long as we do not call our human prudence into deliberation, to see whether we shall trust, or whether we shall distrust, God's word, our affairs go well; but, when we call it into deliberation, we begin to doubt and to vacillate in the faith, as it here occurred to St. Peter with Christ.

*Sixthly*, that the Christian ought then to rely most upon the word of God, when he is in the greatest danger, and when he sees least ground for reliance; and if St. Peter had done so here, he would not have been rebuked as unbelieving and of little faith. And here I understand that because danger stares you in the face at the hour of death, that then it is, when the man is most tempted to doubt in Christian faith, that then he ought to be most animated to believe. *Seventhly*, that God allows us at times partly to lose our confidence, in order that when He succours us, we may not be able to attribute His munificence, not even to our own confidence; like St. Peter, who having partly lost his confidence through fear, yet by calling upon Christ, at the time when he was at his wits' end, showed that he had not wholly lost it. There are some illustrations of this in the Psalms.

*Eighthly*, that although godless men recognise God by outward miracles, they do not follow God, which happened to the men that were in this boat, who knew that Christ was the Son of God, by outward miracle, but they did not follow Christ. So that we know by the result, that there is this difference between the confession of these men, who affirm that Christ is the Son of God, and the confession of St. Peter, which we shall see in chapter xvi.: that theirs was of flesh and blood, of human discourse and judgment; which judged by that, which it saw, of that which it did not see; whilst that of St. Peter was by divine inspiration and revelation; and for that reason Christ did not pronounce these persons blessed, as He did St. Peter, nor did these persons follow Christ, as did St. Peter. And here we understand that miracles, although they apparently work some impression upon men; effectively it is very slight and is soon dissipated; and thus it remains that miracles only avail to confirm the faith of those, who believe by revelation and divine inspiration.

*Ninthly*, that faith is of such efficacy that it obtains from God all that it desires, although he who believes to attain that which he wishes or desires, is not righteous, not having that inspired and revealed faith, which embraces the remission of sins and reconciliation with God; as was the case with these men of Gennesaret, who believed that in touching the hem of Christ's garment, there would be such efficacy that it would heal them of their infirmities; by touching it, they were healed. I am sure that the person who shall well consider these nine things will gather much Christian edification from them.

*He constrained them to get*, &c., is tantamount to His having made them go on board; and *“to send them away”* is the same as to dismiss them: *“didst thou doubt?”* is the same as *“didst thou vacillate?”* *“the hem”* is the edge: and *“made whole”* is the same as they were healed.

## CHAPTER XV.

XV. 1-11.—Then came to Jesus from Jerusalem, Scribes and Pharisees, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders ? for they wash not their hands, when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition ? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother ; and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, that wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me is given to God, he shall not honour his father or his mother. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites ! well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips : but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men. And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand : Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth the man ; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth the man.

The Scribes and Pharisees, like the worldly-wise and

the world's saints, seeing that their wisdom fell prostrate before the wisdom of Christ, and that their sanctity was disparaged by Christ's sanctity, wanted to find something that they might censure in Christ, to sully His doctrine and His sanctity; and finding nothing to censure in His person, they censure His disciples, that they did not wash their hands before meals, according to the tradition of their elders; not to censure His disciples, but in order to reprehend Christ, their Master, who knew their injurious purposes.

He does not reply to their question, but to stop their mouths, He censures them for a very weighty thing wherein they sinned, teaching the people to break the fourth (the fifth) commandment of the decalogue, by their bad tradition; and it was this, that the son might offer to the temple, that which he should spend upon his father, telling the father, that that offering would likewise be profitable to him; for that God would do him good on account of it. And Christ having stopped the mouths of the Scribes and Pharisees by this censure and by the words of Isaiah xxix. 13, He, being unwilling that the calumny of the worldly-wise and the saints of the world, should leave an impression upon the minds of the multitudes, who had heard it, calls them and tells them, what reply should be given to others, when they should ask in sincerity; and Christ means by His reply that man does not offend God by what he eats with his mouth, but by what he brings forth out of his mouth.

This is the meaning of these words, by which we learn this. *First*, that they are always mortal enemies of the Godly-wise and of the saints of God, who are, and pretend to be, worldly-wise and saints of the world. *Second*, that external observances are ever sources of strife. *Third*, that they, who are superstitious in outward observances, are licentious in inward ones, preferring human things to divine, as did these Scribes and Pharisees. *Fourth*, that God's saints should not be anxious to refute the calumnies

of the saints of the world ; but they ought to endeavour to convince those, who hear the calumnies, by showing up the malice of saints of the world. *Fifth*, that the services which men render to God, and the respect which they have for Him, are not pleasing to God, when moved by human teachings and commandments of men. *Sixth*, that God is not offended, save by the malignity that proceeds from the heart ; whence issue evil works, as Christ will declare further on.

Coming to the details of the text, when he says : “ *From Jerusalem*,” he means, that they had come from Jerusalem, and that they therefore were of greater authority. That expression “ *When they eat bread*,” is a Hebraism : it means, when they sit down to eat. “ *Let him die the death*,” is equivalent to, let him die for it. That “ *But ye say*,” &c., this is expressed with such brevity as to be scarcely intelligible, and hence has been differently expounded ; I understand that the Scribes and Pharisees had commanded that the son should present that as an offering to the temple, which he should have spent upon his father’s maintenance ; telling the father that the offering was made for him too, and that God would benefit the father on account of that which he offered in the temple ; and thus by this their apparently pious ordinance, showing that God as father stands first, they brought it about, that the children broke the commandment of God, failing to provide necessaries for their parents ; for this, in Jewish parlance, signifies to honour them.

Christ most appositely quotes Isaiah’s words, to show the false religion and apparent piety of those saints of the world, who calumniated Him to His disciples. That passage, “ *Teaching for doctrines*,” &c., is worthy of great consideration, in order that every Christian may be upon his guard not to teach human things, man’s suggestions, however holy they may be, and however holy they may appear ; since there is so much to teach of divine things, that many lives of many men would not suffice to teach

*the hundredth part of them*; and since God says, that they waste time, who teach as doctrines the commandments of men. Where He says: "*Do they worship me?*" the Greek word signifies to attend divine worship. By "*defileth*," the Greek word here signifies to make common, conformably with the Hebrew tongue, which calls everything prohibited in the law of God, "*common*;" and thus St. Peter said, "*Never have I eaten anything common or unclean*" (Acts x.), and "*to profane a man*" is tantamount to severing him from God; as, for instance, disobedience profanes him, and severs him from God.

The words of Isaiah, according to the Hebrew text, run thus: "*And the Lord said:*" Then as quoted (*oh afflicted*) *this people is so with its mouth, and with its lips doth it honour me, whilst it hath removed its heart far from me, and its fear for me is taught by the commandment of men; therefore behold! I will proceed to do marvellous works among this people, marvel upon marvel, for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the prudence of their prudent ones shall be hid* (Isa. xxix. 13, 14). Where it appears that God, irritated that His people should not serve Him according to the law, which He had given to it; but conformably to what they commanded, who pretended to interpret the law, He threatened the people with the preaching of the gospel, which prostrates the wisdom of the wise, and hides and obscures the prudence of the prudent; it being so, that all natural light, all human prudence and reason, is annihilated and subverted by the spiritual wisdom and prudence of those, who accept the grace of the gospel. St. Paul was engaged in the same consideration, when he quoted part of these words, (1 Cor. i.), and the comprehension of these, serves to facilitate the apprehension of those.

XV. 12-20.—Then came his disciples and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were

offended, after they heard this saying ? But he answered and said, Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone : they are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable. And Jesus said, Are ye also even yet without understanding ? Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught ? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart ; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies : These are the things which defile a man : but to eat with un-washen hands defileth not a man.

It may be gathered, from what the disciples say to Christ, Knowest Thou that the Pharisees were scandalised when they heard this Thine address to the multitude, *videlicet*, that "*Not that which entereth into the mouth defileth the man*," that they either were actually scandalised, the statement appearing to them to be an impious one ; or they feigned to be scandalised, in order that they might scandalise the multitudes, so that they should not follow Christ ; for as against the saints of God, the saints of the world ever make the most of such things. From what Christ replies to the disciples, saying, "*Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up*," it is to be inferred that Christ held it to be a light matter that the Pharisees should be scandalised ; for He knew that they were not planted by God ; and that they therefore could not be in the kingdom of God ; for this pertains to predestination, and nearly concurs with what Christ

says, in St. John x. 28, "*No one shall snatch them out of My hand*," for just as Christ here means, that as to those, who are not planted by God, it cannot but be that they shall be uprooted from the kingdom of God; so He there means, that as to those, who are His sheep, it is impossible that they should be separated from Him.

And from what Christ subjoins, saying, "*Let them alone, they are blind guides of the blind*," it is to be inferred that the multitudes left Christ, led away, scandalised by the Pharisees, whom they trusted rather than Christ, because they were not Christ's sheep; thus, stumbling at the scandal over which the Pharisees fell, they also fell over it. From what St. Peter asks Christ, saying, Tell us, or, "*Declare unto us the parable*," it is matter of inference that the disciples were not without a tendency to stumble. And from what Christ said in reply, "*Are ye also even yet without understanding?*" it is to be inferred that according to Christ, it is not what we eat that defiles us and separates us from God, but what we think, speak and do.

Whence I hold it to be certain, that had some one replied to Christ; does the eating, then, of things, which the law prohibited, defile or separate a man from God? that He would have replied; the things themselves would not do so, but the disobedience of mind to God, with which he would eat those things that he ate, would do so; and thus I understand, that if the disciples of Christ had ceased to wash their hands, through contempt of the elders who had ordained that ceremony, they would have been repreahended by Christ, as they ever deserve to be reprehended, who similarly break the tradition of their elders; whilst they deserve to be exculpated, who break them in the simplicity with which the disciples of Christ ceased to wash their hands, when they sat down to meals; amongst whom there could be neither malice nor presumption, for they learned from their heavenly Master to be humble and to be meek; and they, who are so, do not despise

their inferiors, and *à fortiori* they will not despise their superiors.

From all this it is to be inferred: *First*, that they are not God's plants, that they are not of the number of the predestinated to life eternal, who are scandalised by Christian truth, who leave it and condemn it, because it does not harmonise with their understandings, as did those Pharisees. As to scandal (as a topic) I remit myself to what I have said in a Consideration [lxxvi.] *Secondly*, that neither the tongues of men, nor of angels, are able to render a man capable of (receiving) Christian truth, unless he have the Holy Spirit within him to render him capable.

That this is so, appears from the fact, that had they been equal to the task, the tongue of Christ Himself, the Son of God, would have been much more so, which, however, from what we see in the disciples, appears not to have been so; and it is no use to say that it was through their dulness, for it is most certain that it was wholly due to the excellence of Christian topics, this being certain that by how much the more the disciples were acute and intelligent, so much the more were they incapable of the things which Christ said to them; nay, they were scandalised as much as others. And here I understand that the man, who is capable of Christian truth, understanding it and beginning to feel its effects within him, which consist in remission of sins, and in reconciliation with God, through the justice of God executed upon Christ, may rest assured that he has the Holy Spirit within him, through whose favour he is capable of this Christian truth.

*Thirdly*, that they merit to be exculpated, who, in simplicity, and not through malice or deceit, break some tradition of their elders; such, for instance, as the eating of that which is forbidden, because the fault is not in the eating: whilst they deserve to be reprehended, who, through malice and deceit, break some such traditions, because the fault is in the mind, whence it springs; and they, who

have malice and deceit in their minds, have not yet taken up Christ's yoke, nor have they yet learned to be humble, and to be meek, in the mode of which we have spoken in chapter xi.

XV. 21-28.—And Jesus went out thence and withdrew into the parts of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanitish woman came out from those borders, and cried, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I was not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But she came and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. And he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs. But she said, Yea, Lord: for even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was healed from that hour.

Christ, seeing that those saints of the world, and the multitudes that followed Him, had been scandalised by His words, and He, neither caring to dispute with them, nor to occupy Himself in making them capable of (receiving) the truth, contented Himself with the fact that He had fully propounded it to them, and He went thence to the Gentiles; the mystery beginning to unveil itself, that the grace of the gospel, rejected and despised by the Jews was about to be presented to the Gentiles, who were about to accept it, knowing themselves to be in the utmost need

of it, and therefore embracing it with all their heart. So that it appears that this Canaanitish woman was, as it were, a type of what was about to be realised throughout heathendom; nay, in this woman, I consider every incident betiding every one of us, who accept the grace of the gospel; for that, just as this woman, seeking that Christ should heal her daughter, does not consider herself, but considers Christ; so we, seeking that Christ should heal our consciences, should quiet them and pacify them, we do not consider ourselves, but we consider Christ.

Had this woman considered herself, knowing that she was most alien to God, she would not have confided in Christ, nor would she have dared to present herself before Christ; but as she considered Christ only, and recognised the goodness of God in Christ, she confided in Christ, presented herself before Christ, and with her arguments she almost moved Christ to grant her what she sought; and if we, each and all, had considered self, knowing self to be full of malignity and of perversity, and, therefore, an enemy of God, no one of us would have confided in Christ, nor would have dared to present himself before Christ; but, as the individual considers Christ only, and in Christ sees that all his sins have been castigated, and sees himself, in Christ, reconciled to God, his conscience quiets down and becomes pacified, he holding himself to be pardoned and to be reconciled with God.

And for that, just as this woman, being, as it were, tempted by Christ's answers to be dissuaded from believing, and thus to desist from her entreaty; she was not dissuaded, nor did she desist, nay, she was more incited and more strengthened in her faith and in her entreaty; so we, being at certain times tempted by the persuasions of men, at other times by our own imaginations, and again by those which demons set before us, all which are designed to divert us from the faith, which we hold of our reconciliation with God through Christ; we are not diverted from the faith, nay, we wax warmer in behalf of it, and we

strengthen ourselves the more in it, so that it comes to pass that, just as this woman's faith increased, being tempted to disbelieve, so our faith increases, when we are tempted not to believe. And this is a most reliable token, by which a man may understand whether the faith he holds be inspired, or whether it be taught; for the faith that is taught never increases, and when it is tempted (tried) it wanes.

In this same woman I consider the difference that there is between the person who prays, having been taught; and the man who prays, being inspired; for that he, who prays being taught, is like those whom Christ calls the heathen, who think that they will be heard for their much speaking; whilst he who prays, being inspired, is like this woman, who asked Christ, in two words, what she wanted of Him, propounding her need in terms corresponding with what she felt in her mind. This woman in calling Christ "*The Son of David*," seems to have felt inwardly assured that He was the Messiah, whom the Jews expected, of whom, through proximity, they, who lived in those parts, were informed, that He had to be the Son of David.

Christ, by abstaining from all answer to this woman's cries, exercised her faith; and, by exercising it, increased it. The disciples, in saying to Christ: "*Send her away*," or, get rid of her, &c., showed the fear they had of the scandal, which the saints of the world and other persons brought on them. Christ, in saying, "*I am not sent but unto the lost sheep*," &c., exercised the woman's faith; and He meant, that, since the Father had sent Him for the benefit of the Jews, whom He calls lost sheep, on account of the condemnation to eternal death, which is common to all men, it was not well to embarrass Himself with the Gentiles. Where Christ, in calling those, whom He came to redeem, lost sheep, conforms Himself with what Isaiah says, "*All we like sheep have gone astray*" (liii. 6). Christ, in replying, "*It is not meet*," or, it is not just, "*to take the children's bread*," &c., persevered in exercising the woman's faith, and He means: since I am not sent but to the Israel-

ites, it is not just that I should do for the Gentiles that which I have to do for the Israelites, as it is not right that the father take away the children's bread, and that he give it to curs.

And it seems that those words of Christ were more than superlatively adequate to overthrow the faith of all the men of the world, as effectively they would have overthrown the woman's faith, had she believed, or had she prayed, being taught; but because she believed, and prayed, being inspired, by them she increased in faith, and thus she continued her prayer, moving Christ by her self-knowledge, that she was the vilest and most abject of beings, calling herself a bitch, because when she looked upon herself, she recognised herself to be such; and, as she was great in faith, so would she be great in works, never would she have humbled herself to appropriate the appellation bitch, for self-respect is as annexed to works, as humility is annexed to faith. Christ, in saying, "*O woman, great is thy faith,*" &c., showed that the woman's faith constrained Him to cure her daughter; and I hold it to be certain, that had the disciples said to Christ, since Thou art not come but to Israelites, why dost Thou this beneficent work for this woman, who is no Israelite? Christ would have answered, that faith had made her an Israelite, as it makes all those, who believe, Israelites, as St. Paul states, in Rom. iv. 11.

I have yet two things to speak of here. *The one*, that it seems to me as though I saw this woman, inspired to believe and to pray inwardly, by Christ Himself; who seemed outwardly, as about to divert her from faith and from prayer; so that as perseverance in faith and in prayer was the work of Christ, so was the temptation, to depart both from one and the other: and, therefore, that pleases me, which I once heard say to a person, repeating those words, "*O woman, great is thy faith,*" he said, "Good faith, Lord, Your faith is great, that which You gave her; for, had You not given it to her, she had never had it." *The other*

that, if before that Christ had made peace between God and men by dying on the cross, reconciling us to God, God was so munificent to men, who were His enemies; how much more will He be so now, after that, being already reconciled, we are His friends (Rom. v. 6-10)? Where every one of us may certify himself, saying; if I, being the enemy of God, have been reconciled unto God, by the death of Christ; for God chastised in Christ, what He had to chastise in me; what reason have I to doubt, that, being His friend, and reconciled to Him, but that He will give and grant me what I desire, which is immortality and eternal life with Christ Himself?

XV. 29-39.—And Jesus departed thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and he went up into a mountain, and sat there. And there came unto him great multitudes, having with them the lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and they cast them down at his feet; and he healed them: insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb speaking, the maimed whole, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing: and they glorified the God of Israel. And Jesus called unto him his disciples, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days and have nothing to eat: and I would not send them away fasting, lest haply they faint in the way. And the disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so many loaves in a desert place, as to fill so great a multitude? And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few small fishes. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground; and he took the

seven loaves and the fishes; and he gave thanks and brake, and gave to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitudes. And they did all eat and were filled: and they took up that which remained over of the broken pieces, seven baskets full. And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children. And he sent away the multitudes, and entered into the boat, and came into the borders of Magdala (Magadan).

Beyond that which has been already stated, as to the restoration to health which Christ gave to these multitudes, this presents itself here; that every Christian ought to consider, that since Christ healed the bodies of these persons, in order that they might enjoy the present life, that not being His own peculiar office; how much more will He resuscitate our bodies, in order that they may enjoy the life eternal, this being His peculiar office; conformably with that passage in John x. 10,—“*I came that they might have life;*” and moreover, that since Christ healed these, on account of the faith which they had, that He could heal, and that He would heal them; how much more will He resuscitate us, who, by believing, enjoy (participation of) His righteousness, since it was to this end that He came into the world?

Beyond what is stated in the preceding chapter, as to Christ’s miraculous feeding of these multitudes, this presents itself: that since Christ commiserated, to the extent which we here see, those, who followed Him with human affections from personal interests and for material things, and He, being unwilling that they should perish by the way, miraculously supported them; how much more will He commiserate us, who follow Him, with spiritual affections, and therefore to the glory of God, and for spiritual things, will He, being unwilling that we perish by the way, miraculously provide us with every

necessary in the present life; and will defend us against all those things, which might sever us from Him, causing us to lose the portion which we have in the kingdom of heaven; and beyond that, since Christ did not separate Himself from His disciples on account of the little faith which they had in Him, which is manifest from this, that they, having witnessed, just previously, the miracle of the five loaves, doubted now that they had seven; on the contrary He went to them, and helped to fortify them, and to confirm them, in the faith, we ought not to wonder, nor to fear on account of our weakness in the faith, when we shall vacillate, being tempted to doubt, nay to rest assured that Christ will do with us, as He did with His disciples, fortifying us and confirming us in the faith.

And ever when I recollect the many miracles which Christ's disciples saw, and the many good discourses which they heard, and of the slight impression which both these wrought upon them, because they had not yet received the Holy Spirit; Christ not having yet been glorified; I certify myself in this truth, that miracles avail but little, that good discourses avail but little, to them, who have not the Holy Spirit; it is indeed true, that they both avail much to dispose man to ask of God His Holy Spirit, and to assist him after that he has received the Holy Spirit, just as what the disciples of Christ heard and saw of Christ, before they received the Holy Spirit, greatly influenced them.

## CHAPTER XVI.

XVI. 1-4.—And the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and tempting him asked him to show them a sign from heaven. But he answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the heaven is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day: for the heaven is red and lowring. Ye know how to discern the face of the heaven; but ye cannot discern the signs of the times. An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of Jonah. And he left them and departed.

The saints of the world, intolerant of the presence of Christ's sanctity, because it prostrated their sanctity, were ever tempting Him, as they ever have and continue to tempt Him; and thus feigning, that they desired to be certified that He was the Messiah, and that the miracles which He wrought were inadequate to assure them; they demanded that He should work some miracle in the heaven, such, for instance, as bidding the sun to stand still, as did Joshua. Whilst Christ, knowing their evil intentions, and being unwilling to give them any other sign than that of His death and resurrection, rebukes them for the blindness and ignorance with which they treated the Holy Scriptures; telling them that they had faculty and reasoning powers wherewith to judge this day of the morrow's weather, as to there being sunshine or

rain, but that they had not the faculty or reasoning powers wherewith to understand from the Holy Scriptures, that that was the proper time in which the Messiah should come. This is the sense of these words. “*It will be fair weather,*” is equivalent to “there will be sunshine.” That which is here rendered gloomy, the Greek renders “sad or troubled,” and means what we call gloomy. Christ calls the Pharisees and Sadducees hypocrites, for this was the title He ordinarily gave them, and because they came to tempt Him; being one thing outwardly and apparently, whilst they were another inwardly.

As to the sign of the prophet Jonah, I remit myself to what I have stated upon chapter xii.; adding this, that it would have gratified me much had Scripture stated that the Ninevites knew of that which had befallen Jonah: and that they thence had believed him, and were converted; and although this may not be inferred from it, neither can the contrary; accommodating myself thereto, I say, that I understand that just as Jonah’s being three days and three nights in the whale’s belly, was a sign to the Ninevites, by which, convinced in their consciences, they believed in Jonah’s preaching and were converted to God; so the three days and three nights that Christ was in the sepulchre was a most powerful sign to convince the consciences of men to believe Christ’s testimony to our reconciliation with God, by His blood; which He poured forth at the time that our sins were chastised in Him; and thus of our justification, resurrection, and glorification. They, who are not convinced by this sign, would not be convinced by all the signs that could be seen in the heavens and upon earth; and I hold it to be certain that men are convinced by it, in proportion as they believe in it.

XVI. 5-12.—And the disciples came to the other side and forgot to take bread. And Jesus said

unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, We took no bread. And Jesus perceiving it said, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have no bread? Do ye not yet perceive, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? How is it that ye do not perceive that I spake not to you concerning bread? But beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Three things may be inferred from these words. The *first*, that the incredulity of the human mind, however much it may believe, so long as it is human, will doubt, when want presents itself to the eye; like the disciples, who, seeing that they were without bread, thought to suffer hunger; as appears from what they said to each other and from what Christ says in answer to them. And here I understand, that, if we would never doubt, however great our want may be, we should pray to God to strip us of all that we have from Adam, because, as long as we shall have a vestige of Adam, we shall be tempted to doubt, and we shall doubt.

The *second*, that men, so long as they are absorbed in outward things, are most incapable of inward things; like the disciples, who, occupied about bread, interpreted Christ's words in connection with bread. And here I understand that he, who would be capable of receiving inward and spiritual things, should first divert his mind from outward

and material things, sure that he will never understand the former, whilst absorbed in the latter.

The *third*, that it concerns the saints of God to be ever alert, looking, observing, and on their guard, that no trace of the teaching of the saints of the world, the Pharisees were such, nor of the worldly wise, the scribes were such, be to any extent entertained by them; each one of them taking for himself the counsel which Christ here gives His disciples; because the teaching of the saints of the world and of the worldly-wise is always a leaven of evil. And here I understand how little I ought to trust to the persuasions of men that are held by the world to be holy and wise; and I understand that the best means by which I shall be enabled to guard myself from them, is to pray continuously to God, that He should impress upon my memory the Christian faith, together with the teaching of Christian life, which the apostles and the evangelists preach and teach me; in order that, when the persuasions of the saints of the world and of the worldly-wise come to this comparative trial, that may happen to them, which befalls artificial (sham) precious stones, when placed by fine ones; and even that which befalls fine ones, when placed by those which are finer than them.

Since I had written this, it occurred to me, that Christ's aim here was to counsel His disciples, that they should be upon their guard against that, which the scribes and Sadducees taught, as to the pomp, of which they raved, as about to be manifested by the Messiah; and this apprehension is greatly favoured by the confession of St. Peter, which immediately follows. Where it says: "*Because we took no bread*," I think that it is to be understood, He says this, because we have not taken bread.

XVI. 13-19.—Now when Jesus came into the parts of Cesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am ?

And they said, Some say, John the Baptist ; some, Elijah : and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am ? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona : for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church ; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven : and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven : and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

There are many things in these words worthy of much consideration, for the understanding of which a man should be denuded and laid bare of every human affection, of every human opinion, and even of all discourse of human prudence. I shall state what I now understand respecting them, always remitting myself to the apprehension of those saints, who better understand them.

As to the *first*, I do not understand that Christ asked His disciples the opinion that men held of Him, in order to know it, but, that they, telling what opinion they held, which He well knew, should remain confirmed in it by His reply to them. And here I understand that God wills that we should confess the faith, which He imprints on our hearts, in the presence of our superiors, in order that, they confirming us in it, we may attain salvation and eternal life, and, therefore, St. Paul says, "*With the heart man believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*" (Rom. x. 10).

From the various opinions which it appears that men

held of Christ, which all tended to detract from the glory of Christ and the omnipotence of God, as though He could not create a new prophet save by the resuscitation of one of these already dead; and from what I, in the course of some experience, have seen, I understand that men as men, and without intending to do so, always form opinions of Christ, and of those who are members of Christ, that issue in detracting from the glory of Christ and the omnipotence of God; whence, therefore, it would be very sound counsel to all, to refrain from forming any opinion upon spiritual and divine things, whilst they are men unre-generated and unrenewed by the Holy Spirit; and even then, it will be well for them to hold by the anchor of Christian faith and by the purpose of Christian life, maintaining Christian decorum; and as to other matters, not to bind themselves by any opinion; because, when they bind themselves to one, they become obliged to defend it; and when they wish to defend it, they deviate from Christian meekness and Christian decorum.

St. Peter in saying, "*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,*" confessed, as I understand, Christ's humanity and divinity; His humanity, in that Peter confessed Him to be the Messiah promised in the law, from which it appeared that He had to be a man of Abraham's lineage, of the seed of David; His divinity, in that Peter confessed Him to be the Son of God, one and the same with God; upon which confession the Christian faith is founded; for that we, who accept the general indulgence and pardon, which has been intimated to us in the gospel, found our faith upon Christ's being the Messiah, and His being the Son of God; and thus we certify ourselves as to the remission of our sins and as to our reconciliation with God, holding ourselves to be the children of God, incorporated into Christ, and heirs of eternal life with Christ. They, who do not know themselves to be pardoned and reconciled with God, in Christ and through Christ, neither do they know themselves to be the children of God, habili-

tated unto the inheritance of God, which is life eternal; though they speak of Christ as St. Peter spoke; they may hold it to be certain that they do not speak by divine revelation, but by human instruction; and such persons never follow Christ, they do not imitate Christ's meekness or humility, for they are not subject to the yoke of Christ.

I understand that He calls God the live or living, because He alone has life in Himself, and gives existence and life to all things that exist and live; and as to this mode of speaking used in Scripture, calling God the living, living water, living stone, living hope, &c., *I have expressed my views in my Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Peter, Chapter I.*

By those words of Christ, "*For flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee,*" I understand, that they are not blessed, who confess Christ to be the Messiah, the Son of the living God, by report and by human and outward instruction; but that they are so, who confess Him by revelation, and by divine and inward inspiration, like St. Peter. And the blessedness consists, in that they, being incorporated into Christ, God does not look upon them as to what they are in themselves, but as to what they are in Christ; whilst, thus united and incorporated into Christ, they enjoy what Christ enjoys, their position being the same as Christ's. Whence I understand that it concerns every man, who makes the same confession that St. Peter here makes, to examine himself very closely, whether the confession produces its effects upon him; in order that, if he find himself with the confession, but without its effects, he may understand that his faith is of flesh and of blood, and, therefore, that St. Peter's bliss is not his; and this being understood, that he turn with fervour to God, supplicating God to give him faith by revelation and inspiration, that he, too, may participate in the bliss that is annexed to Christian faith inspired and revealed. Barjona is the same as the son of John.

Holy Scripture habitually calls men, with all that they possess as children of Adam, “*flesh and blood*,” comprising the knowledge of good and of evil, natural light, which is peculiar to Adam, for he acquired it, by eating of the tree of knowledge of good and of evil.

I understand Christ to speak as requiting and confirming St. Peter's confession, when He says, “*And I also say unto thee that*,” &c., as though He had said, “Thou hast confessed Me to be the Messiah, the Son of the living God, and I give thee this name of “stone,” on account of the firmness which there is in this thy confession, which is, as it were, stone; and I tell thee, moreover, that upon this stone I will build my church, &c. Where I understand Christ to say that He was about to build His church upon St. Peter's confession; meaning that the foundation of the Church is to confess Christ to be the Messiah, the Son of the living God; for that they, who accept the grace of the gospel, have remission of sins and are reconciled unto God, by the justice of God already executed upon Christ; whenever they are tempted to doubt of this truth, they recur to this firm and stable foundation, saying: He, who hath wrought out this benefit for us, and He, who hath published it and causes it to be published throughout the world, is Jesus, the Nazarene, who is the Messiah, promised in the law of God, and is the Son of God; and this being thus granted to be truth, that is also truth, which He published and causes to be published, which is the general indulgence and pardon, which they enjoy, who believe in it. *It is thus that I understand the Christian Church is founded upon belief in Christ, according to that confession which St. Peter here makes.*

I likewise understand, that Christ, willing to show the excellence of His Church and to give assurance to those, who belong to it, says, “*And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*;” meaning, that all the infernal spirits combined shall not be able to subvert this Church, to pull it down, and to prostrate it to the earth, for that it shall be

mighty through Christ to resist them all ; so that this is but tantamount to what Christ said elsewhere, “ *No one shall pluck them out of My hand* ” (John x. 28, 29). Which declarations, and those which are like them, we, who are Christ’s sheep, ought to keep well before our eyes ; for, when we give due credit to Christ’s words, we are able with St. Paul thoroughly to certify ourselves, that neither death, nor life, nor any creature, shall be able to separate us from Christ ; and consequently, neither shall they from the kingdom of Christ in the present life, nor from the kingdom of God in the life eternal.

Christ, willing by a further gratification, the more to confirm and the more to establish St. Peter’s confession, says to him, “ *And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven ;* ” and I understand, that declaring what these keys are, He says, “ *And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth,* ” &c., so that these keys consist in binding and in loosing. I understand that Christ had these keys, whilst He lived bodily amongst men ; and I understand that He, here, in pronouncing St. Peter blessed, and in confirming him in the faith, which he had from Christ, used one of the keys ; and I understand that He used the other, when He proclaimed Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum to be infidel ; and when He proclaimed the High Priests, Scribes, Sadducees, and Pharisees, to be hypocrites.

I likewise understand that the apostles used one of these keys, when they admitted those that confessed that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the living God, into the Christian (Church) congregation ; as St. Philip admitted the eunuch ; St. Peter, Cornelius ; St. Paul, Titus, &c. ; and that they used the other key, when they separated from the Christian congregation, those who lived viciously and profanely, who gave testimony concerning themselves that the faith which they had was neither revealed nor inspired, but historic and taught. So that the use of these keys, whether to confirm the faith of the man, who through the Holy Spirit, believing with the heart, confesses with the

mouth, that which he believes, affirming to him that his faith is good, as did Christ here with St. Peter; a most necessary thing in the church; because the mind of man is so greatly solicited to doubt, that however great the inward inspiration he may have, he always stands in need of outward testimony; or whether the use of these keys be to condemn the infidelity of the individual, who does not believe that of Christ which St. Peter did; as also that of the man, who, although he confess with the mouth, that which St. Peter confessed, shows, by his bad life, that he does not confess it with the heart; that he speaks, being taught and not inspired, and that he speaks by report of flesh and blood, and not by revelation of the Holy Spirit.

I will here add this, that we know Christ by revelation of God, when God removes the blind from the eyes, that we may know Him to be the Messiah, and that we may know Him to be the Son of God; knowing Him to be the son of David, according to human generation, and to be the Son of God, according to divine generation. They, who know Christ thus, accepting the grace of the gospel, hold all their sins, past and future, to be pardoned; and holding themselves to be friends of God, they love God; and recognising themselves to be the children of God, they study to imitate Christ, with the purpose of maintaining the decorum of the children of God. They, who know Christ by report of men, or by books, never hold themselves to be pardoned by God, nor to be friends of God, nor sons of God, and thus they do not love God, nor do they study to imitate Christ.

This is what I at present understand by these words, which are of such importance, that, although it seems I may rest satisfied with this apprehension of them; still I am yet desirous of attaining another, a better; and thus I pray God that He may give it me, either Himself, or through the instrumentality of some one, His servant; but that, relatively to His glory and that of His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

XVI. 20-23.—Then charged he the disciples that they should tell no man that he was the Christ. From that time began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall never be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art a stumbling-block unto me: for thou knowest not the things of God, but the things of men.

I think the reason why Christ prohibited His disciples from proclaiming Him to be the Messiah, was because God had ordained that this mystery should neither be discovered nor proclaimed amongst men, until that Christ had died, had risen, and had been glorified. By that passage, "*From that time forth began Jesus*," &c., I note this, that Christ confirmed His disciples in what they had to believe concerning Him, before that He discovered to them the mystery of His death; and I understand that He told them of it before it came to pass, in order to facilitate their reception of it. And here I learn, that they, whom God brings to Christ, ought to be confirmed and strengthened in what they have to believe of Christ, before that they be told that they have to suffer for Christ; and, moreover, that before the suffering come, that it be frequently brought before them, in order that, when it shall come, they may be found armed and ready; so that they may not be separated from Christ by suffering, relinquishing Christian faith and Christian life. The word "*elder*" is equivalent to presbyter, and is of titular dignity. And here it is worthy of consideration, that they, who filled the

*highest posts of the Jewish hierarchy, were they, who put Christ to death.*

I consider St. Peter here to be the type of all them, who (prompted) by human prudence, presume to rebuke and counsel those, who, being children of God, are ruled and governed by the Spirit of God; for that, as St. Peter, elated possibly by the words which Christ had just addressed to him, presumed to rebuke Christ, because He was about to carry out the will of God, being led by the Holy Spirit; so they, elated with the name of Christians, with Christian ceremonies, and with some knowledge of Christian things, which they have attained by revelation and from Scripture, presume to rebuke those who follow Christ; and who, in following Christ, are about to carry out the will of God, being led by the Holy Spirit.

Where I understand that it is the duty of those, who, incorporated into Christ, are the children of God, to answer men, who with a show of zeal rebuke them, by saying, as Christ did to St. Peter, "*Get thee out of My sight, Satan,*" &c. And to be able to answer them thus, they must first be persuaded and assured, that all, who are not children of God, being unregenerate and unrenewed by the Holy Spirit, are as Satan himself to them; for, entertaining this conviction, they will regard all their rebukes as suspicious, for all their zealous actions and all their counsels being human, can have no other origin than flesh and blood.

Christ, in saying, "*Thou art a scandal to Me,*" means, thou weariest and troublest me, as does the stone over which we stumble. And here we learn a mode of scandalising men of God and those who are the children of God. And Christ in declaring whence it proceeded that St. Peter was a scandal to Him, says, "*For thou knowest not the things,*" &c., meaning that the disgust, which St. Peter's words gave Him, proceeded from St. Peter's not knowing the things of God, because he did not understand or fathom them. Had St. Peter known the divine counsel in the death of Christ, he would not have set himself

to rebuke Christ, because He went to die; and had he only considered the divine wisdom and power which He saw in Christ, he would have been silent, and would have left Him to do as He pleased; but as He did not consider the one, and did not know the other, knowing only things, as men regard them; that death was bad, and an ignominious death much worse; he, hearing Christ speak of His death, thought, that in speaking to Christ as he spoke to Him, it was to the point.

Where Christians may consider, that since Christ, offended by St. Peter's words, which proceeded from a lively mind not yet mortified by faith, did not cast Him off from Himself, and only spoke sharply to him, that neither will He cast them off from Himself, when they shall offend Him, as did St. Peter, by the vivacity of a mind not yet mortified by faith, although He should speak sharply to them, making them feel that He holds Himself to be offended by them. Where He says, "*Thou knowest*," one may say, appreciatest, esteemest, and feelest. In that passage, "*Be it far from Thee, Lord: may this never be to Thee*," and in that, "*Get thee out of My sight, Satan*," these are the substitution of Spanish modes of expression for Hebrew ones.

XVI. 24-28.—Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds. Verily I say

unto you, there be some of them that stand here, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

Christ, having intimated to His disciples the mode of His passion after that He had confirmed them in the faith, intimates to them, what each one of them would have to suffer, having, as good disciples, to follow their master; to go the way He went. Where it appears that Christ takes occasion, from what St. Peter had said, condemning suffering as an evil, to speak thus to all His disciples: not only is it necessary that I go and suffer, to lose this life which I have as a child of Adam, but know, that it is, moreover, necessary, that they, who are about to follow Me, should go the same way that I do, denying themselves, depriving themselves of all their pleasures, of all their satisfactions, and of all their comforts, and that shouldering their cross, the agony and the disgust, which this privation will cause them, and the dishonour and the ignominy which this will cause them in the eyes of the world; and that then, they will follow Me, in the manner, in which I will that they follow Me. I have spoken on this in two Considerations [xvii. and lxiv.], commenting upon these same words of Christ.

And here I understand that Christ, willing to declare wherein this denial consisted, adds: "*For whosoever will save,*" &c., showing that a man denies himself, when in order to save his life, in order to be raised to life eternal, he loses it in this; despising it, and making light of it; depriving himself of all that has above been spoken of, and offering himself to martyrdom, whenever it shall be necessary for the manifestation of the gospel.

That expression, "*For my sake,*" is worthy of consideration, that men may understand, that when they lose their lives, whether by the above-mentioned privations, or whether by martyrdom, they will not find them in the life eternal, unless they have Christ for their object; their

main intent being the glory of Christ, not their own peculiar interests, nor their opinions and passions. And here I understand that none lose their lives for Christ's sake, save those, who hold themselves to be righteous in Christ; for these alone are they, who cannot pretend to either justification or glorification; knowing that they have attained it by Christ, they only strive to imitate Christ from the obligation of Christian regeneration: whilst all others, in losing their lives, lose them in order to justify themselves before God, but not through Christ.

That, "*For what shall a man be profited,*" &c., I understand to be said comparatively; for just as it avails a man but little that he be lord of the world, if he give his life to attain it; so likewise it avails but little to another man, that he enjoy in this world all that can be enjoyed in it, since he thereby loses the enjoyment of the life eternal. And in saying, "*What shall a man give,*" &c., He means, that life is a thing so precious, that there is nothing adequate to offer for its redemption; as though He should say: and since I offer you eternal life in exchange for the present life, it ought not to appear to you to be harsh to propose the loss of the present life. Agreeably with what is read in Psalm xlix.

And Christ, purposing to declare when this life eternal shall fully and completely commence, says, "*For the Son of man shall come,*" &c., meaning, that it shall commence from the day of judgment; on which day, He says, God shall, "*Give every man according to his work,*" meaning, that He will give eternal life to those, who shall have lost the present life for His sake; and that He will give eternal death to those, who shall not have been willing to lose the present life for His sake.

I do not understand what Christ subjoins, saying, "*I tell you of a truth that there be some of them,*" &c., and I state that I do not understand it, for it does not agree with what some say, that they saw Christ in His kingdom, who saw Him transfigured upon Mount Tabor; for I do not

understand that to have been the kingdom of Christ, neither would it be to the purpose in relation to what precedes; neither do I agree with what others say, that the disciples did not taste of death, because they did not feel the agony of death, like other men; for I know, that according to the idiom of the Hebrew tongue, "to taste of death" is the same as to die; neither do I agree with what others say, that they saw Christ in His kingdom, who saw Christ glorified, after the coming of the Holy Spirit, His gospel having been accepted by the majority of the nations; because I see that Christ here speaks of the day of judgment, on which day, He will discover His glory and His majesty to the whole world.

True it is that St. Mark's words, "*Till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power*" (ix. 1), might be applied to the coming of the Holy Spirit; and there is no doubt but that the disciples saw it come as such, at the time they received the Holy Spirit; from which time we understand the kingdom of heaven commenced, that which was preached in the time of Christ. And if it could be said that some of those, who were present at the time Christ spoke these words, are reserved unto the day of judgment, never having died, there would be nothing to doubt. In point of fact, we attain to know but little of the mysteries of God, however much we presume upon our attainment of them; and, therefore, it is a safe thing to confess our blindness in relation to them.

## CHAPTER XVII.

XVII. 1-9.—And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart: and he was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his garments became white as the light. And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elijah talking with him. And Peter answered, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, I will make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah. While he was yet speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And lifting up their eyes, they saw no one, save Jesus only. And as they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen from the dead.

What Christ's purpose was in giving those three disciples this taste of the glory of the life eternal, may, indeed, be conjectured, but is difficult to realise; the more so by those, who, like myself, shall never have found

ourselves in aught similar, whereby we might be enabled to testify of the effect which such a vision works upon the mind of the person who sees it; wherefore I remit myself to what they say, or shall say, who shall be somewhat experienced. To whom likewise I remit the consideration of the reason, why Christ selected those three disciples from amongst the others; whether it was, because these were more capable than the others of greater mortification and purification in their minds; or, whether it was, because these had greater need of being certified and confirmed in the opinion which they were to hold of Christ, although I maintain this, that it depended upon the will of Christ, to elect preferably these three than any one of the others, in order to show them His majesty and His glory in the life eternal.

In saying, "*He was transfigured*," it means, that He presented Himself in another form, from that in which He was wont to do so; it was His wont to present Himself as a human being, passible and mortal, whilst here He presented Himself as a Divine Being, impassible and immortal. I think that Christ presented Himself upon the Mount to these three disciples as He presented Himself to all after the resurrection, at the time of His ascension to heaven.

St. Matthew, wishing to show wherein this transfiguration consisted, says, "*And His face did shine*," &c.; and by saying, "*His raiment*," &c., meaning, that His garments also changed colour. Where He says, "*Like the light*," St. Mark says, like the snow. They understand that Moses and Elijah were seen with Christ, because the law and the prophets bear testimony to Christ, and are, as it were, ministers of Christ.

What Moses and Elijah spoke to Christ is understood from St. Luke ix. 31, 32, who states, that they spoke of the death which He was about to die at Jerusalem; they spake, as it were, of infamy, being in glory. Whence we may learn that it is a good thing to converse about

what we have to suffer for Christ, and to think about it when we find ourselves specially favoured of God and of Christ, in order that favour may not make us presumptuous. I think that this conversation was not held for Christ's sake, but in order that the disciples should hear; in order that they might know, that it was necessary, that what Christ had already told them, should take place, should find its accomplishment; and that they should not hold it to be a defect in Christ, but perfection; since they witnessed that Moses and Elijah, the law and the prophets, spoke of it. Here it might be said that Moses was with Christ in spirit, whilst Elijah was so in body and soul, from what is read in his history of the chariot or whirlwind of fire, in which he was carried up.

What St. Peter said to Christ, "*Lord, it is good for us to be here,*" is ever said to Christ by those, who, conscious of Christ's favours, feed both soul and body upon them; whilst they do not say so, who, knowing that suffering is more associated with the condition of the present life than joy, when in glory remember infamy, and find it not less pleasant to be crucified with Christ on Mount Calvary, than to be transfigured with Him on Mount Tabor; to be crucified with Christ than to be glorified with Christ; nay, they hold themselves to be safer when they find themselves crucified, than when they feel themselves to be, as it were, transfigured.

And here I understand two things. *The one*, that Christ does that with us all, which He did with these disciples, for that, just as He made these disciples taste of His glory, before that He did so of His ignominy, showing Himself to them transfigured before that He did so crucified; so He makes us taste peace of conscience, through reconciliation with God, with the other effects that faith works in us, which incorporates us into Him, before that He delivers us up into the hands of those, who treat us as they treated Him. *And the other*, that they show great imperfection, who, in their inward tastes and feelings, give way to such

transports, as to allow the flesh to participate in them; just as it is imperfection in outward things to give way to such transports as to allow the mind to commingle pleasurabley with them; for, it is so that, it behoves the perfect Christian to use outward things, that pertain to the body, with care and circumspection, that the mind do not mix up pleasurabley with them; and to use inward things, that pertain to the mind, with care and circumspection, that the body do not take pleasure in them; leaving outward things, when the mind is about to feed on them, and leaving inward things, when it feels that the body is about to feed on them.

St. Peter's motive for wishing to erect three tents or huts, wishing that each one of the three should have his own, is, I think, impossible to know; and it is of little importance to know it, since he spoke it like an imperfect man. It would be well worth knowing how these three disciples, being still imperfect, were capable of enduring such glory and such majesty, as were presented to them, in witnessing Christ transfigured, and with Him, Moses and Elijah; but as to this, I content myself, understanding that God Himself, by whose will they ascended the Mount, rendered them capable of enduring that glory and majesty. And here this occurs to me: that it is no mark of perfection to see visions and revelations; since these three disciples, being still imperfect, were admitted to this. I state this, in order that neither they, who shall have them, may be elevated by it, nor they, who shall not have them, may be depressed by it; considering that Christ sent His Holy Spirit as well upon those disciples, who did not ascend the Mount, as upon those who did ascend it.

The terms in which the Eternal Father gives us testimony of Christ are worthy of profound consideration, since it is so, that by them we understand that Christ is the Son of God; and because He calls Him, "*His beloved*," we understand that Christ is the Son of God, wholly otherwise than are they so, whom Holy Scripture calls children of

God, since Christ is the beloved, the dear and favoured one, and He is the first born and only begotten, His generation being divine, and, as might be said, "*Whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting*" (Micah v. 2), being one and the same, and of the same substance with God, the same as the Father. And, therefore, with Christ *alone* has God been, and still is, well pleased, for, as says Isaiah (liii. 10), "*In Him the pleasure of the Lord has prospered*," meaning, that in Christ, God's purpose has been accomplished; for that, He laying the sins of us all upon Christ, and chastising us all in Christ, Christ bore the chastisement without deviating a point from the will of God. And it is well to observe that in that expression, "*I am well pleased*," this word in the Greek, *εὐδόκησα*, is that, which St. Paul uses, when he speaks of our predestination.

That (command) "*Hear ye Him*," is much more to be noted by us Christians, in order that we may know that it concerns us to stop our ears wholly against human prudence and reason, and to all natural light, and to open them to Christ only; to follow what He shall tell us; however much human prudence with natural light shall roar and shout the contrary. And to him, who shall wish to know, in two words, what it is that he has to hear from Christ, as to the things wherein he has to obey Christ, I will tell him them, in those, which He has said in chapter xi., "*Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me*," &c., in which Christ has included Christian faith and Christian life, as we have there declared.

In that which St. Matthew narrates, that, "*When they lifted up their eyes, they no longer saw Moses or Elijah, seeing Christ only*," may be understood, what Christ Himself has stated in chapter xi., that the law and the prophets served until John came; nay, I understand that it ever is so, that although every one, whilst he does not hear the Father's voice, whilst he has not inward inspiration, sees Moses and Elijah with Christ, using the law and the prophets, to see Christ; but when hearkening, he hears

the voice of the Father, being inwardly inspired and drawn to Christ, Moses and Elijah disappear, no longer availing himself either of the law and of the prophets, in order to see Christ, to accept His righteousness, and to cleave only to that. Where I will say this, that Moses and the prophets are so polite, that as soon as Christ enters, they walk out, giving way to Christ; and, therefore, the best expedient of all to liberate a man from Moses and the prophets is to introduce him to Christ, to Christian faith, and afterwards to Christian life.

I understand that Christ commanded these three disciples not to publish this vision, for the same reason that He previously had commanded them all that they should tell no one that He was the Christ; in fact, it is most clear that Christ would not manifest to men who He was, whilst He wore humanity. And here a letter that I have written, having for its aim to show the reasons why Christ at times concealed Himself, whilst at other times He discovered Himself, comes in most appositely; and so does Consideration [lxxxix.] where I have given six reasons, why, according to what I then understood, Christ lived amongst men in that form of life in which He lived.

XVII. 10-13.—And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elijah must first come? And he answered and said, Elijah indeed cometh, and shall restore all things: but I say unto you, that Elijah is come already, and they knew him not, but did unto him whatsoever they listed. Even so shall the Son of man also suffer of them. Then understood the disciples that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

The disciples, assured that Christ was the Messiah, appear to have had a doubt awakened in them from having seen Elijah in His company; and seeking to be certified

in relation to it, they ask Christ, saying, “*Why then do the scribes say,*” &c., as though they had said, since it is a fact, that Thou, Lord, art the Messiah, and that Elijah has not come before Thee, what foundation have the scribes for saying, “that Elijah must come before the Messiah?”

From this question I understand two things. *The first*, that the scribes were at that time, what doctors of Theology are at present, men well read in the Scriptures. *And the second*, that it is a safe thing for all Christians to manifest the doubts that will present themselves on Christian topics, to persons capable of satisfying them in relation thereto; doing as the disciples did with Christ; and not as do many, who, partly through fear and partly through shame, because it is a dishonour to doubt, dare not communicate their doubts; and, keeping them to themselves, they do not take it into account, that they act upon their minds as poison would do upon their bodies.

Christ answers the disciples’ doubt by saying, “*True it is, that Elijah will come,*” &c., where, considering that I do not see how it can pertain to St. John the Baptist to restore everything; and that Malachi (iv. 5) says, that Elijah shall come before the day of judgment, I understand that by saying, “*True it is that Elijah,*” &c., He confirms the opinion of the scribes, which was founded upon Malachi’s prophecy, stating that Elijah will come before His second advent to judgment; and that with his coming, all things shall be restored to their proper form of existence; and I understand these things to be those which reason and human prudence, pretending to prepare and to rectify, have disfigured and spoiled, in the Christian Church, together with those which Antichrist will have disfigured and spoiled.

And I understand that Christ in saying, “*But I say unto you, that Elijah,*” &c., means, that the Elijah, who had to come before His first advent, was already come; and that the Jews, not recognising him as the person that he was, had put him to death, obeying their malevolent wills. And

thus I understand Christ to say that St. John the Baptist filled the office at His first advent, which Elijah will fill at His second advent; for that, just as Elijah will prepare the Christian Church for the coming of Christ in glory, so St. John the Baptist prepared the Hebrew Synagogue for the coming of Christ in humility; and I understand that the preparation consisted in showing its depravity to it, and in showing Christ to it, at the same time, as its remedy. Christ going on to say, "*Even so shall the Son of man*," &c., means, that same which happened to St. John the Baptist at the hands of these, shall also betide Me, for that just as they, not knowing that John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah, as had been announced by the angel to Zachariah, his father, before his birth, put him to death, so they, not recognising Me as the Messiah, will put Me to death.

That, "*And they knew Him not*," may be referred to the scribes, together with that, "*Shall also suffer of them*." All, who are eminent in the Christian Church, ought to accept this reply which Christ made to the doubt, propounded by the disciples, as a pattern by which to regulate themselves in relation to those, who shall come to propound their doubts to them, for solution; therein following what Paul teaches in Romans xiv.

XVII. 14-21.—And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a man, kneeling to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is epileptic, and suffereth grievously; for oft-times he falleth into the fire, and oft-times into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. And Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I bear with you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked

him ; and the devil went out from him ; and the boy was cured from that hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast it out ? And he saith unto them, Because of your little faith : for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place ; and it shall remove ; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

It seems that at the time in which Christ took the three disciples, with whom He ascended the Mount, the other disciples remained, with the multitude that followed Christ, on the plain ; and thus Matthew narrates, that when Christ came down with the three disciples to the spot where the others had remained, the event happened, which is here recorded, in which these things present themselves as worthy of consideration.

*First*, the indignation of Christ against the unbelief of His disciples and of the other people, and the disgust which He felt in the company and converse of the men, and the desire that He had to get free from them. And here I understand two things: *The one*, that just as faith is the thing which most pleases God, so unbelief is the thing which most displeases Him and offends Him ; and *the other*, that Christians may hold a feeling of indignation against the unbelief of men, and the desire to get free from them, in order neither to feel, nor to see, their manifestations of unbelief, to be a good token of their faith.

*Second*, that unbelief is an evil so deep-seated, that few recognise it, not even when they have been brought into difficulty by it, like Christ's disciples, who, not having been able, through their unbelief, to cure another, were unaware that their inability sprang from unbelief. And here I understand that it concerns every Christian to re-

cognise himself as unbelieving and wanting in faith, attributing all his faults and all his defects to his unbelief.

*Third*, that since it is a fact, that there is nothing impossible to the believer, even to the moving of mountains from one place to another, it concerns every Christian to persevere in prayer, asking of God faith and still more faith, never desisting from this prayer, until he recognise such faith within him, as should seem adequate to move mountains from one place to another, whenever the occasion shall arise in which the glory of God shall be illustrated by this change. What I say of mountains, I say likewise of all other miracles, by which the glory of God is illustrated, the truth of the Christian faith being thereby confirmed. The comparison of the grain of mustard-seed I understand as illustrating relative smallness.

*Fourth*, that as Christ when consoling His disciples, and unwilling that they should be dispirited by what He had said to them about their unbelief, added, "*But this kind*," &c., meaning, and there is also this (to be considered) that demons, like this one, do not come forth from men's bodies, save by prayer and fasting. Where there is nothing improper in understanding that the prayer of the person ejecting the demon is kindled by fasting: so that prayer is kindled by fasting, whilst faith is increased by prayer; and by faith, strong and energetic, the demon is ejected; because, as Christ has just said, nothing is impossible to the man who believes.

*Fifth*, that Christ is superior to everything, for since it is so that that kind of demons was of such a character that they do not come forth from human bodies, save by prayer and by fasting, Christ made that one come forth, without fasting and without prayer; as appears from this, that when the demoniac was brought before Him, the demon at His rebuke left the man, free and sound. Whence it is certainly something wondrous, that the men of that time should witness a thing like this, and that men of the present time should believe it, and that

neither the former should have had eyes to recognise Christ to be the Son of the living God ; nor the latter have eyes to know that this Christ, whom they confess to be the Son of the living God, shall fulfil to them what He promises, upon the part of God, saying, that he who shall believe the gospel, and shall be baptized, shall obtain salvation and life eternal. Whilst they, who believe in the gospel, who accept the general indulgence and pardon, hold themselves to be pardoned and to be reconciled with God, by Christ and in Christ, being incorporated by faith into Christ.

XVII. 22, 23.—And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be delivered up into the hands of men ; and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised up. And they were exceeding sorry.

There are two things worthy of consideration in these words. *The one*, that Christ went on mingling the sweet with the bitter for His disciples, resurrection with death. And here I understand that Christ is always doing the same with us, mingling vivification with mortification for us, God's inward favours with the world's outward disfavours, in order that we may not faint by the way. And *the other*, that the disciples were so attached to the things of the present life, that although resurrection was intimated to them in connection with death, they were saddened ; though indeed their sadness may be referred to the natural inclination of man, which is ready to believe in evil and slow to believe in good ; and thus, the disciples as men, readily believing in death, and not being so ready to believe in resurrection, were saddened. Whilst they would not have been saddened, had they believed as much in resurrection, as they believed in death. The Greek word rendered " abode " means lived, conversed.

XVII. 24-27.—And when they were come to Capernaum they that received the half shekel came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay the half shekel ? He saith, Yea. And when he came into the house, Jesus spake first to him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon ? the kings of the earth, from whom do they receive toll or tribute ? from their sons, or from strangers ? And when he said, From strangers, Jesus said unto him, Therefore the sons are free. But, lest we cause them to stumble, go thou to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up ; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a shekel ; that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

Matthew relates that Christ having come with His disciples to Capernaum, which was His own country, they, who collected the (Roman) Emperor's tribute there, thinking that Christ, as a native, ought to pay as did others, but still marvelling at what had passed, came up to Peter, standing outside the house, and asked him whether Christ meant to pay that which others did ; to which Peter definitely replied, that He would ; and that Peter having entered the house where Christ was, He, showing that He knew what had transpired with these men, spoke to Peter about it, before that Peter could speak to Him ; and that Christ, wishing to show Peter that he had answered the collectors unadvisedly, showed by His own answer that just as the children of princes are free from all payment, so He, as the Son of God, and they, who are incorporated into Him, as children of God, are free from all payment ; and that Christ wishing to show Peter that he did not say this in order not to pay, but that He actually wished to pay, in order not to scandalise the men ; and that to pay it there was no need to ask it, He being Lord of every-

thing; neither to take it from any one, to whom it could be useful, He commanded Peter to go to the sea, and that he should cast a hook with a fishing-rod, and that he should open the mouth of the first fish he should take; and that finding, as he would there find, a piece of money worth twice the amount of what Christ had to pay, that he should take it, and that he should give it to those men, for them both.

Whence we learn all this: *First*, that we, who are incorporated into Christ, are children of God, and are free and exempt from all payment to which other men are subject, not being in relation to God, or by strict obligation bound to pay anything; and this is a part of Christian liberty. And Paul feeling thus said (1 Cor. ix. 19), "*For though I be free from all men,*" &c. And in another place (1 Cor. vi. 12), "*All things are lawful unto me.*"

*Second*, that we ourselves, who, incorporated into Christ, are the children of God, voluntarily pay the same as others, being called upon by Christian charity to do so. And Paul feeling this said (1 Cor. ix. 19), "*I have made myself the servant of all,*" &c. And in another place (1 Cor. vi. 12), "*All things are not expedient,*" &c.

*Third*, that it behoves the children of God themselves to have more regard not to scandalise men of the world in human things, than saints of the world in divine things; since it is a fact that Christ had respect for these men of the world, lest He should have scandalised them, had He not paid them what they expected to receive from Him, which was a worldly thing; not having had respect for the Pharisees not to scandalise them, saints of the world, as He scandalised them, when He defended His disciples against the calumny cast upon them by the Pharisees, in relation to their washing or their not washing of their hands.

*Fourth*, that since it is a fact that Christ could, with the same facility, provide for the necessities of all those, who incorporated into Him, are His brethren, with which He

provided the money to pay the double tribute ; so it is also a fact, that in calling upon us to be almoners, that we should act benevolently to Christians, He does not so much command us in order that we should relieve their necessities, as that we should show, through them, the love we have to Christ and to God, in helping those persons whom Christ and God have promised to help, it being our only aim, that they, realising what truth there is in the promises of Christ and of God, may increase the faith and confidence which they have in Christ and in God.

In commanding Peter to pay for them both, I simply understand Christ to have evinced liberality and great voluntary subjection, since in having been asked but for Himself, He paid for Himself and for Peter. The didrachma or double drachma was a piece of money of the value of fifteenpence-halfpenny, equal to two carlins\* or two reals.† The stater or shekel was another piece of money, twice the value of the didrachma.

\* The carlin is a small Neapolitan coin, quoted here, because Valdés was then living at Naples.

† The real is a small Spanish coin of silver, value fivepence-farthing.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

XVIII. 1-6.—In that hour came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who then is greater in the kingdom of heaven? And he called to him a little child, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily, I say unto you, Except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me: but whoso shall cause one of these little ones who believe on me to stumble, it were better for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea.

I understand by what I read in the gospels by Matthew and Luke, that there arose amongst the disciples, from what Christ had said of His death and of His resurrection, a dispute, as to who would be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven; and that from the dispute it came to pass that they came to Christ with this question, saying, “*Who then is greater*,” &c. Where it appears that Christ desirous of repressing the ambitious spirit which He recognised in His disciples, calling a child unto Him, He said to them, “*Verily I say unto you, except*,” &c., as though He had said: see what false notions you hold, which, if you do not cease

from, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. And I understand that when the disciples received the Holy Spirit, by the regeneration which He wrought in them, they became as children, and thus took possession of the kingdom of heaven; and I likewise understand that as they grew in Christ, so they became perfect men in Christ.

And what I consider in these disciples of Christ, I consider likewise in all, who are the disciples of Christ; who, every one of them, regenerated by the Holy Spirit, become as children, and as such enter into the kingdom of heaven, where, striving to imitate Christ, they grow from being babes in Christ to the full stature of men in Christ; and thus by Christian faith they come to be children in Christ, and, as children, they enter into the kingdom of heaven, and, by Christian living, they come to be full-grown in Christ, and they preserve themselves in the kingdom of heaven.

When Christ further says, "*Whosoever therefore shall humble himself;*" &c., I understand Him to answer the disciples' question, meaning that that person shall be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, who shall be most childlike, being as humble as a child, holding himself to be, and to be worth in himself, as little, as any child may be and is worth in itself.

And Christ, being desirous of encouraging His children that they should not think that, in reducing themselves to be children, they are lost, adds, "*And whoso shall receive one such;*" &c., as though He had said: and do not think that they, who shall reduce themselves to be children, shall remain unprotected; for I would have you know, that they shall ever find a protector; for it shall come to pass, that he, who, in My name, shall protect one of these, it shall be as though he had protected Me, since it was I, who converted him into a child; and He adds: "*And whoso shall cause one of these little ones to stumble;*" &c., as though He had said; and do not think, that they, who shall be My children, will have no one to look after them,

for I would have you know, that he, who shall offend the least of them, in the least thing of the world, shall be chastised by God in such a manner, that it had been better for him, to have been previously drowned in the depths of the sea. So that Christ's children may rest assured that they will never want protection, without going in quest of it, which they do not attain as children of the world; nor will they ever want a protector when men shall maltreat them, without their making resistance, which, as children of the world, they did want.

The millstone turned by an ass spoken of by Christ, is the lower one in the corn mill, which is made to revolve, being drawn by an ass.

XVIII. 7-10.—Woe unto the world because of occasions of stumbling! for it must needs be that the occasions come; but woe to that man through whom the occasion cometh! And if thy hand or thy foot causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into the eternal fire. And if thine eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into the hell of fire. See that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

Christ, having entered upon the consideration of that most terrible impropriety into which men fall, when they scandalise, when they molest and annoy His children, proceeded to say, “*Woe unto the world*,” &c., meaning, that the castigation wherewith the men, who shall scandalise

His children, shall be castigated, will be most terrible and most cruel. And when He says, "*For it must needs be,*" &c., His meaning is the same as that expressed by St. Paul (1 Cor. xi. 19), where he says, that there must needs be sects, heresies, and divisions, in order that the goodness of the good be manifested. And when He adds, "*But woe be to that man through whom,*" &c., His meaning is, that the necessity which there is that there should be scandals shall not exonerate the scandaliser from chastisement, because the scandaliser never intends to meet that necessity, but to carry out the malice and malignity of his own mind; as we see in Pharaoh, who scandalised the Jewish people; and, as we see in Judas, who scandalised Christ, and those, who were His; and, as we have seen in those, who, from one generation to another, have scandalised the children of Christ and the saints of God.

In relation to scandal, I understand that Christ here gave a most necessary counsel to every Christian, who, regenerated by Christ, has entered into possession of the kingdom of heaven, saying, "*If thy hand or thy foot causeth thee to stumble,*" &c., where Christ means, that for the man, who, by Christian faith, is entered into possession of the kingdom of heaven, and, by Christian life, conserves himself in its possession, and who lives otherwise than do they, who are in the kingdom of the world, living like those who are in the kingdom of God, it behoves him to leave, separate from, and cast off from himself, everything, be it what it may, that can impede or disturb his Christian life, the imitation of Christ, although they may be as necessary to him, and although they may be as dear to him, as hands, feet, and eyes. Thus do I understand these words of Christ; and as to the reasons why I understand, that they cannot be understood literally, I remit myself to what I have said in Chapter v., where nearly the same words occur.

Christ, reverting to speak in favour of His children, says, "*Take heed that ye despise not,*" &c., where I understand

that He counsels those, who are strong in the faith, and who are perfect, that they should neither despise nor set at naught those, who are yet weak in the faith, and are children, so that this counsel harmonises with St. Paul's discourse in Romans xiv. And Christ, in stating why His children ought not to be despised, says, "*For I tell you that their angels*," &c., meaning the angels, whom God has given them, in order that they should do for them, that which is stated in Psalm xci. 11, 12, for they are so favoured of God that they are ever in the presence of God; and, their angels being so, they are there also themselves; and being so themselves, God takes special care of them, and, therefore, they ought not to be despised and set at naught.

And here they, who, by acceptance of the grace of the gospel, are children of Christ, ought to encourage and strengthen themselves; for, knowing themselves to be children of Christ, they study to lead a Christian life, to imitating Christ, and to be men in Christ perfect and entire, considering that God takes very special and very peculiar care of them, having them always in His presence. And here likewise all men ought to learn, as well the spiritual as the animal and carnal, but the spiritual more especially, that it is safest not to despise or set at naught any one, however weak, however vile or contemptible he may appear in his manners or in his life, or to go so far as to maltreat him, and thus offend him and scandalise him, considering that that very man may be one of Christ's children.

XVIII. 11-14.—For the Son of man came to save that which was lost. How think ye? if any man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and go unto the mountains, and seek that which goeth astray? And if so be that he find it, verily

I say unto you, he rejoiceth over it more than over the ninety and nine which have not gone astray. Even so, it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

Christ proceeds to show, in relation to His children, that He values and esteems them, however insignificant they may be ; and in these words tells three things. *First*, that the main design of His coming into the world was, "*to save that which is lost*," He means to give eternal life to those, who lost it in Adam. And here it is right to say, that just as through Adam's disobedience we all died, so through Christ's obedience we all rise again ; though the resurrection will only be glorious for those, who believe that they have died in Adam, and that they have risen again in Christ ; they will study to live in the present life as dead and as risen again, imitating that life which has to be lived in the life eternal, the pattern of which, as to purity, goodness, sincerity, truth, and fidelity, &c., we see in Christ.

*Second*, that it is the joy of Christ's heart, that every one of those, whom He leads to believe that they have died in Christ and that they are risen in Christ, do study to live as dead and as risen again. Christ compares this His joy to that of the shepherd, who, going in search of a sheep that he had lost, finds it, so that the comparison of the shepherd may agree in this, that just as the shepherd goes diligently in search of the lost sheep, and when he finds it, rejoices over it, so Christ came diligently in search of those, who are His sheep, predestinated to life eternal, who were lost, wandering amongst men of the world, condemned to eternal death, and it rejoiced His heart when He found them, having died for them, and having risen again for them ; and He rejoices continuously with every one of them, who accept His death and His resurrection for their own.

*Third*, that it is the will of God that these children, whom Christ sought and found, and whom He seeks and finds, should in no wise perish ; understanding that they would be in danger of perishing were they to be despised, scandalised and maltreated by men ; especially by those, who are pre-eminent in Christian life ; to whom I understand that Christ here principally addresses Himself ; admonishing them, that they should not despise or scandalise His children, when they shall be infirm and weak in faith. But I have already stated that what St. Paul says as to scandalising the weak, affects this. And as to scandal I remit myself to what I have stated in a Consideration [lxxvi.]

And since all this argument is in favour of the children of Christ, let us avail ourselves of it, but in such manner that we steadily study to believe in Christ, until we come to be perfect in Christ ; and it behoves such persons to be on their guard, lest they should scandalise such as ourselves, who are Christ's children ; and they will not scandalise us, unless they despise us, considering that it is the will of God that not one of us should perish ; and that Christ rejoices, when He finds us and draws us unto Himself, that we may be His children, to which end He came into the world. And here I understand that all we men came into the world to live, and that Christ only came into the world to give life. The Greek word  $\pi\lambda\alpha\omega$ , rendered lost, gone astray, signifies to wander, lost, from the right way.

XVIII. 15-20.—And if thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone : if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he hear thee not, take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses, or three, every word may be established. And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the

church ; and if he refuse to hear the church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican. Verily I say unto you, What things soever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven : and what things soever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Because, one of Christ's disciples, might in the name of all those, who are perfect men in Christ, reply to what Christ has stated, by saying : If one of these little ones shall offend me, scandalising me, whether directly or indirectly, have I to tolerate him, in order not to scandalise him, in order not to give him occasion to dissever himself from Thee ? Christ proceeds to say : "*And if thy brother sin against thee,*" &c., where Christ gives those, who in Him are perfect, the rule, by which they have to regulate themselves with those, who are children in Him, keeping themselves ever on their guard not to scandalise any one of them, in any manner.

And the rule is this, that when he, who is perfect in Christ, shall see one of us, who are children in Christ, do something wrong, against whomsoever it may be, departing from Christian obligation or from Christian feeling, he should not go and publish it, because it will irritate him to do worse ; but that he should privately rebuke him, lovingly and charitably ; and that, in case such an one shall not correct himself, nay, should he persevere in that his evil life or bad feeling ; that he return to rebuke him in the presence of one or two Christians, in order that they may be able to testify to this second rebuke ; and that, in

case he shall not be willing to correct himself even with this, that he tell it to the Church, to the whole congregation of Christians, perfect and imperfect, who shall be found there, in order that the whole Church may rebuke him; and that, in case he shall not amend at this common rebuke, that he be no longer held to be a child of Christ, but to be a man of the world, such as are the ethnics and publicans, and that he no longer care to scandalise him, to dissever him from the company of those, who are the children of Christ.

And in order that he, who, as being incorrigible, shall be separated from our company, may know for certain that he is separated, too, from union with God, and from incorporation into Christ; and in order likewise that he, who, being separated (from our company), shall repent, and shall be desirous of returning to it, becoming a good child of Christ, and striving to become a perfect man in Christ, may know for certain, that, in being admitted to our company, he is also admitted to union with God, Christ adds, "*Verily, I say unto you, what things soever,*" &c., meaning that they, who, as being incorrigible, shall be excommunicated from the Christian Church, shall also be excommunicated from fellowship with God, and from incorporation into Christ; and that they, who repent and correct themselves, shall also be readmitted into the Christian Church, and likewise to fellowship with God, and to incorporation into Christ.

As to what remains, I remit myself to what I have said upon Chapter xvi., where these same words recur, only that the word "heavens" is there used in the plural, whilst that same word is here used in the singular—but the Jews were lax in their use of their numbers.

And in order that there might be no doubt as to the number of persons required to constitute a Church that could bind and loose, Christ, as I understand, here adds, "*Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree,*" &c., meaning that two of those, who are perfect men in Christ,

suffice to bind the incorrigible and to loose the corrigible; so that their binding and loosing shall be effectual with God, provided that they be agreed, and that they both concur in the same sentence. And by adding, “*For where there are two,*” &c., He confirms what He has stated, showing that the sentence of these is, by His presence, effectual; for, they being assembled in His name, He is in their midst, in whom and through whom their prayers are accepted by the Father, and, being accepted, are rendered valid by the Father.

Thus do I understand that these words of Christ go on, each dependent upon the other, understanding that Christ addresses them to every one of those, who are influential in His Church, for I see that He conversed with His disciples, whom He instructed, although they then were imperfect, as to what they should do when they were perfect; and that, when He says, “*Thy brother,*” He means him, who, like thyself, is my member; and that, when He says, “*Shall sin against thee,*” He means, shall offend thee, shall scandalise thee, either by doing that which he ought not, or by feeling that which he ought not; and that when He says, “*That at the mouth of two,*” &c., He means, in order that everything may be affirmed by the testimony of two or three persons; and understanding that, by “*The Church,*” He means, the number of children in Christ, and the perfect in Christ, incorporated into Christ. The ethnic (Gentile) is the same as infidel, no Christian.

I also understand Him, when He says, “*As touching anything that they shall ask,*” &c., Christ magnifies the power of those, who being agreed, are assembled in Him; they determine a matter; for their faculty is unlimited as to what they shall ask of God; because they never ask anything but that which is conformable to the will of God, for they, being such, ask, being moved by the Spirit and not by the flesh.

When He says, “*Two of you,*” He means what I have stated, that they, who have to achieve this result, must be

perfect men in Christ, since He does not say two of the children, but two of you, whom He taught as to how you should regulate yourselves with my children. And if there shall be some one, who hereupon may doubt and say that he has frequently seen persons assembled in Christ, to ask of God something; as, for instance, the apprehension of a passage of Holy Scripture, which was not at that time conceded to them, as appears from this, that they, at another time, have understood it in a different manner from what they then did; and that thus, by the second apprehension, they come to know that the first was incorrect, I shall remit myself to what I have stated in Reply [xvii.], adding this, that we often desire these apprehensions, and ask them, from carnal motives, from mental curiosity, and they are denied us when we ask them, being conceded to us when we do not ask them, because that now we have lost the affection of curiosity.

And if it shall appear strange to any one that St. Paul at Antioch, publicly rebuking Peter, should not have followed this Christ's teaching, in giving him first the secret admonitions of which Christ here speaks; let him consider these three things, and it will not appear strange to him. *First*, that St. Peter was not a child in Christ, but a perfect man in Christ, and that St. Paul, therefore, could not think that his rebuke could scandalise St. Peter. *Second*, that the thing was of such importance, involving Christian liberty and evangelical truth, that it did not admit of such delay as would have been needed to give the prior admonitions. *Third*, that the Holy Spirit does not subject itself to any laws or doctrines, save those which promote the glory of God, dispensing with them for the sake of the glory of God, which the Holy Spirit designs in persons, who are ruled and governed by it, as was St. Paul.

XVIII. 21, 22.—Then came Peter, and said to him, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against

me, and I forgive him ? until seven times ? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times ; but, Until seventy times seven.

St. Peter, having learned that the brother, who, having been rebuked once, twice, and thrice, without amendment, shall be ejected from the Church, and be held as a heathen and a publican, but that he ought to be readmitted to the Church upon his repentance and amendment (for herein consists the loosing), and wishing to know how many times, he that shall have been ejected ought to be readmitted, asks Christ whether seven times will suffice. And I hold it to be certain that it appeared to St. Peter that his suggestion was an ample one, and, in point of fact, according to the dictates of human charity, his suggestion was ample ; but his suggestion, measured by the dictates of Christian charity, was narrow, as appears from Christ's reply ; who, employing a Hebraism representing infinite number, says, that He wills that the man, excommunicated from the Church as incorrigible, be readmitted to it, as often as he shall demand pardon for the past, and shall promise to live and feel like a Christian.

As to the limitations with which these words are limited, I remit myself to the truth, and say, that although it seems that Christ having previously said "*shall sin against thee*," and that St. Peter saying here "*shall sin against me*," is to be understood of what a Christian does directly offending another, that the offended rebuke the offender, and that he pardon him ; it is not to be understood otherwise than in a general sense ; as though one should say that that Corinthian sinned against St. Paul, who (in 1 Cor. v.) took his father's wife, because his departure from Christian life, was a scandal to the Church. That this be so, appears from this, that if St. Peter's question be understood of personal offences, he might be excused, since he had already learned from Christ that the Christian has to be very free in pardoning ; and that having known this, it

would have been a most impertinent thing for him to say, “*Until seven times?*” Because it may there be inferred that St. Peter would, after the seventh time, have wished to avenge himself upon the man, who should have sinned against him.

From Christ’s reply, we understand that we are never to lose hope of a man’s improvement, so long as he lives, considering that God has power to lead him to live like a Christian and to feel like a Christian, however widely he may deviate from the one, and however alienated he may be from the other. They, who think that this revulsion depends upon man, lose at once all hope, whilst they, who know that it depends upon God, never lose it; for they do not found their hope upon man but upon God, knowing that He has power to convert stones into children of Abraham.

XVIII. 23-35.—Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, who would make a reckoning with his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, who owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not wherewith to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And the lord of that servant, being moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. But that servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, who owed him a hundred pence: and he laid hold on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me what thou owest. So his fellow-servant fell down and

besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay that which was due. So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were exceeding sorry, and came and told their lord all that was done. Then his lord called him unto him, and saith unto him, Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou besoughtest me: shouldest not thou also have had mercy on thy fellow-servant, even as I had mercy on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors till he should pay all that was due. So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts, their trespasses.

By this parable or similitude it seems that the above expressions, "*Shall sin against thee*" and "*Shall sin against me*," are to be understood of personal sins and offences, whilst, from what we have above seen, they are not to be understood otherwise than of sins and offences in general; and not knowing how to get out of this difficulty, I prefer to confess my ignorance, rather than do as do some, who, wresting this parable, would make it speak contradictorily of what Christ Himself manifests to be His intention to say, where, towards its end, He says, "*So shall my heavenly Father also do unto you*," &c., from which words it most clearly appears that Christ's design in this parable is to admonish us that we should pardon our brethren the injuries, wrongs, and damage which they shall do us, considering that God pardons us our iniquities, our rebellions, and our sins; whilst He threatens us, that, if we shall not actually pardon our brethren, that neither will God pardon us, that He will revoke the general pardon which He has made us, not permitting us to participate in it.

This is really the design of the parable, which, so far as admonition is concerned, affects those, who, being imperfect Christians, forgetful of the benefit which they have received through Christ, do not treat their brethren as God treats them; where I hold it to be certain that it is impossible for him not to pardon, whose memory is alive to the fact that he is pardoned, thinks about it, and considers how important it is to him; and, as regards its threat, I understand that it affects those, who, being almost aliens from Christ, are not well assured that they are pardoned by Christ. And here I understand, that they, who do not hold themselves to be pardoned by God, never do pardon as they ought; so that it is a good token, by which a man may be assured that he actually does hold himself to be pardoned by God, when he feels that he pardons his brethren, with all his heart, without any retention of rancour in his mind; for it is so, that he, who pardons, testifies concerning himself that he holds himself to be pardoned; whilst he that does not pardon, testifies concerning himself, that he does not hold himself to be pardoned, that he does not believe in the gospel of Christ, and that he is no true Christian.

As to what is personal in the parable, it is to be understood, that, in saying that the kingdom of heaven is likened unto, or is compared to, a man, a king, it does not mean that the kingdom is like the king, but that in the kingdom this happens to the king; for that just as the king, in settling accounts with his servants, brings them to humble themselves, for they know that they cannot pay him, and, after that they have been humbled, he pardons them; so God, settling accounts with those whom He has elected for His own, gives them to know themselves, whereby He brings them to humble themselves, for they know that they cannot justify themselves in His presence, and humiliated, He shows them how He has pardoned them in Christ; and that just as the king, in order to pardon his servant, overlooked the insolence which he showed, when he

said, "*And I will pay thee all,*" but dwelt upon the humility he showed, when he fell down and worshipped him, saying, "*Lord, have patience with me;*" so God, to admit us to the benefit of Christ, to the grace of the gospel, overlooks the insolence and presumption with which we think, that with time, we shall be able to satisfy His justice, but dwells upon the fact that we humble ourselves, for we know, that in the condition in which we find ourselves, we can do nothing without His mercy, remitting ourselves, as we best can, unto it.

God knows our evil nature, and hence is not as rigorous with us, as we are with each other; and it is so, that those of us, who do not know the nature of man as God knows it, are so rigorous against the weak and infirm, that they do not pardon them, not even that which they ask to have pardoned in themselves; whilst God pardons us more fully than we ask that He should pardon us; doing with us that which this king did for his servant; for the servant asked for time to pay, knowing that then he would be unable to pay; whilst the king, knowing that he would not be able to pay at the end of the period, pardoned him all the debt, releasing him from it.

That likewise comes to pass in the kingdom of God which occurred in that of this king, for that just as the pardoned servant, forgetful of the benefit received, would not pardon his fellow, so they, who forget that they are pardoned by God, will not pardon their brethren; and here let every Christian learn to keep alive in his mind the memory of the pardon which God has wrought for him in Christ; and that just as the king, offended at the baseness of the servant, revoked the pardon which he had given him, and insisted that he should pay him the whole debt, delivering him to this end into the hands of those who tormented malefactors; so God, offended at the baseness of those, who will not pardon their brethren, will revoke the pardon which He has wrought for them in Christ, since they, by withholding pardon, will show and

will testify concerning themselves, that they do not hold themselves to be pardoned; that they do not believe in the general pardon through Christ; and, insisting upon their payment of the whole debt in full, He will cast them into hell-fire, where all they shall go to dwell, who, withholding pardon, testify concerning themselves that they do not hold themselves to be pardoned. Such is my apprehension of this whole parable.

And because, when speaking of the king, where the text says "*fellow and fellows*," the Greek word signifies fellow-servant and servants of the same Lord; and when, in speaking of God, it says "*brethren*," it would seem that this pardon might be restricted to those who belong to Christ, to the Christian Church, and that, in such case, this parable might, in some manner, apply to the interpretation of the preceding words generally; but there are two things contrary: the one, that the parable does not say that the hundred pence, for which the one servant cast the other servant into prison, were his lord's; and the other, that Christ attaches much importance that the pardon be from the heart, with all the soul, which cannot be, save in personal offences, and, therefore, I again confess my ignorance.

## CHAPTER XIX.

XIX. 1-9.—And it came to pass when Jesus had finished these words, he departed from Galilee, and came into the borders of Judea beyond Jordan ; and great multitudes followed him ; and he healed them there. And there came unto him Pharisees, tempting him, and saying, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause ? And he answered and said, Have ye not read, that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife ; and the twain shall become one flesh ? So that they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorce, and to put her away ? He saith unto them, Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives : but from the beginning it hath not been so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery : and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery.

The Pharisees, like saints of the world, envious of Christ's holiness, came to Christ to tempt Him in connec-

tion with matrimony; where I think the temptation consisted in this, that that law of divorce being held to be very lax, the Pharisees felt assured that Christ would speak against it, and that in speaking against it, they would find occasion to calumniate Him, and to put Him to death; so that, when it is said that they tempted Him, it may be understood that they provoked Him to speak against the law. Whence I understand that Christ, knowing their wicked minds, does not answer them as to what they asked of Him, as to what was then lawful, according to Moses' law, but as to what was lawful by natural law.

And here I see a very great difference between the law and the gospel; for the law, condescending to man's weakness, permitted that to him which was not permitted to him by natural obligation, granting him dispensations in matrimony and in many other things; whilst the gospel, correcting man's weakness by regeneration and Christian renovation, causes him to fulfil the natural obligation of human generation and brings it to pass, that getting beyond this, he fulfils the spiritual obligation of Christian regeneration; nothing being reckoned up against him wherein he fails, in either the one or the other whilst he is imperfect, nay, showing him that his shortcomings are not reckoned up against him, it brings him to such perfection, that he is led to fail in nothing, from the vivid perception, that his failings are not reckoned up against him.

They, who being carnal, live after the flesh, will never in any wise believe in this truth, for they know that if they believed that their misdeeds were not reckoned up against them, they would be more vicious and licentious than they are; but they will believe it, who, being spiritual, live after the spirit, for they experimentally realise it.

Here this occurs to me, the law rendered men irresolute, weak, and faint, whilst the gospel makes them brave, valiant, and stout; and I understand that irresolution, and weakness and faintness necessarily affected those, who

were under the law, because they never dared to separate themselves from the observance of its ceremonies ; whilst fortitude, valour, and spirit necessarily affect those, who are under the gospel, for as Christ has stated in chapter xi., the valiant are they, who take the kingdom of God by force.

When Christ says, "*Have you not read*," &c., I understand it to be His design to tell them, that since it is so, that God when He created the first man and woman, made the one male and the other female, saying by mouth to Adam that it was His will that man should be so united to woman, that he should take her for his companion ; and that for her sake he should separate himself from everything else in the world, even from father and mother, being instructed, that although before they were united, they were two bodies, yet after their union they were but one body ; and such being the fact, that the man ought to persevere in company with the woman, and the woman in company with the man, without a thought of separation, either of him from her, or of her from him, and that it is great audacity in man, when by his own authority, he separates a thing that God has united so intimately.

And because Christ's reply did not admit of the inference, that He condemned what the law prescribed, the Pharisees, seeking to carry out their design, interrogated Him afresh, saying, "*Why then did Moses*," &c. To which Christ replied, that Moses disregarded the obligation of human generation (birth), but considered the hardness, or, more properly speaking, the weakness, of the Jews, who wanted spirit to remain with the woman of their choice ; so that men were permitted to do that by the law of Moses, which was forbidden them by the law of nature, by the obligation of (birth) human generation.

What Christ adds, when He says, "*And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife*," &c., I understand as pertaining to the time of the gospel ; in which it appears

to be the will of God that the Christian in matrimony should follow the obligation of human generation, which in matrimony nearly conforms with the obligation of Christian regeneration; and not with the permission of the law of Moses, which deviated from one obligation and did not come up to the other. And I have said "*nearly*," because the obligation of Christian regeneration, going beyond the obligation of human generation, requires, for the sake of the gospel, that the man leave the wife, not that he repudiate her; but that he lose the affection which he had for her as a wife; and that he wholly leave her, when she shall become an impediment to him; whether it be to his preaching Christian faith, whether it be to his teaching Christian life, whether it be to his living like a Christian, imitating Christ. The same holds of the wife with the husband, as of the husband with the wife.

As to what I have said upon St. Paul's seventh chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, and as to divorce, to the desertion or not of the woman, as to Christian matrimony, as to the Christian's design when he contemplates marriage, and as to how he has to regulate himself in marriage, and as to the marrying or not marrying of the deserted or repudiated wife, I remit myself to what is practised.<sup>1</sup>

Where He speaks "*of putting away, and of her who is put away*," we must understand to repudiate and the repudiated wife, and in saying, "*He who made them from the beginning*," I think His meaning to be: He who originated everything, He who created them, giving them the existence which they have. And where He says "*for this cause*," I understand, "for this union's or matrimony's sake." And in saying, "*shall put away*," He means, shall separate from himself, shall forsake. Where He says "*joined together*," the Greek word signifies yoked together, placed under the same yoke. Where He says "*for adultery*," there is a different word, used in the Greek, from that which is used where He says "*commits adultery*," but

<sup>1</sup> Valdés possibly said so, fearing the Inquisition.

in both instances the word "adultery" rightly presents the sense.

XIX. 10-12.—The disciples say unto him, If the case of the man is so with his wife, it is not expedient to marry. But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, but they to whom it is given. For there are eunuchs, who were so born from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs, who were made eunuchs by men; and there are eunuchs, who made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.

The law of matrimony which Christ dictated conformably to the obligation of human generation, appearing to the disciples to be a hard one, because they had, by permission of the law of Moses, been accustomed to one opposed to it, they say to Christ, "*If the case stands thus,*" &c., meaning that if the man has to be bound to the wife whom he takes, conformably to the obligation of human generation as Christ has stated, it is not well for him to take a wife, to marry. And Christ answers them, saying, "*All are not capable of receiving this,*" &c.; He confirms what the disciples have stated, that it is not well for the man to marry, for the reasons which St. Paul lays down in 1 Cor. vii., whilst He adds, "*but they to whom it is given,*" meaning that they, who have God's gift to that end, are able to live without a wife, whilst all others are unable to do so, for they want the self-mastery to live chastely.

And because it might have been replied that there are those who live without a wife, not having that gift of God which He suggested, He adds, "*for there are eunuchs,*" &c.; laying it down, that there are three classes of men, who

can live without a wife. *First*, there are those, who are by nature cold, being born so from their mother's womb; these, through defective nature, can live without a wife. *Second*, there are man-made eunuchs; this was done in former days to promote the state of those, who employed such men, they, by the caprice of men, lived without a wife. *Third*, there are those, who endowed by God with the ability to live without a wife, and knowing that it is better for them to do so, for that they are more free and less preoccupied to enjoy the kingdom of God and to serve Christ in it, they do not marry.

When Christ subjoins, "*He that is able to receive it, let him receive it*," He shows two things: *one* that it is good to be wifeless, and the *other*, that it is difficult; since it is a fact, that of all the men, who are not comprehended either amongst the first or second whom Christ here classifies, it is only good for them to live without a wife out of matrimony, who know that God has endowed them with the ability to do so; who know that they are capable of living chastely. A style of life that is good so far as the man enjoys the advantages and is freed from the disadvantages, of which we read in 1 Cor. vii.; and I remit myself to what I have stated in my Commentary upon that chapter, here adding this: that it appears to be a thing worthy of consideration that it is only upon this subject of matrimony that Christ speaks so reservedly, that He neither persuades to it, nor dissuades from it.

Where He says, "*Able to receive it, let him receive it*," in the Greek it is the same word as where He says "capable." And where He says "*thing*," it may be rendered "saying." Eunuchs in Greek signify keepers of the bed, for it is to this end that wealthy grandees made them eunuchs.

XIX. 13-15.—Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should lay his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But

Jesus said, Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come unto me : for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.

From what has been stated in the preceding chapter in relation to children, we must understand what Christ designed when He says, "*Of such is the kingdom of heaven;*" where I understand that Christ, considering that we Christians are converted, by regeneration and Christian renovation, into children, in the manner we have seen, delighted and rejoiced in that age; so that He, when saying, "*of such,*" be understood as speaking of those, who were children like these, not by generation, but by regeneration.

The intention, which they had, who brought these children to Christ, was the same that they have who take their children to one, whom they know to be a good Christian, to pray over and to bless them, saying, "God bless and prosper thee," or something like that; and it is thus that instead of our blessing, the Jews were wont to lay their hands upon the head, possibly imitating the patriarch Jacob when he blessed his children.

When it is said, "*And that He should pray,*" it means, and that He should pray to God for them. The reason, why the disciples scolded or rebuked those, who brought the children, was, that they thought Christ would hereby be wearied and annoyed; and Christ's motive, when He says, "*Suffer little children,*" &c., is that which we have stated, and to show that the Christian, who takes possession of the kingdom of heaven, should recognise himself to be a child, and should live on in hopes of growth in Christ, until he attain manhood in Him.

Here it may be said that they forbid Christ's children to come to Christ, who, pretending to preach Christ and the gospel, do preach Moses and the law. They likewise

prevent Christ's children to come to Christ, who withhold the water of baptism from them.

XIX. 16-26.—And behold one came to him and said, Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life ? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good ? One there is who is good,—that is God ; but if thou wouldest enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which ? And Jesus said, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother, and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I observed : what lack I yet ? Jesus said unto him, If thou wouldest be perfect, go, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven : and come, follow me. But when the young man heard the saying, he went away sorrowful : for he was one that had great possessions. And Jesus said unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And when the disciples heard it, they were astonished exceedingly, saying, Who then can be saved ? And Jesus, looking upon them, said to them, With men this is impossible ; but with God all things are possible.

The Christian ought, with all the greater attention, to see to it that he do not allow himself to be deceived in his

apprehension of this conversation between Christ and the youth; for that, because Christ was speaking with a Jew, it seems that it might be gathered from it, that a man may attain eternal life, by outward works, a thing most contrary to evangelical truth; now therefore it is right to observe that Christ is speaking with a Jewish youth, who sought to justify himself and to attain eternal life, but by his works, and not through Christ, as he shows by asking, "*What good shall I do?*"—and that he had a good opinion of himself, being self-persuaded that he had fulfilled the law, he shows by saying, "*All these things have I observed from my youth;*" and he was, moreover, more attached to his riches than to eternal life, as he shows when he leaves Christ sad, because Christ had touched him to the quick.

Having brought ourselves up to the apprehension of these words, to the conception that Christ formed of the youth, when he began to speak to Him, we shall go on with them after this manner. The youth, in saying to Christ, "*Good Master, what shall I do?*" &c., showed three things. *One*, that he held Christ to be good, whilst he recognised Him to be nothing more than man; and, consequently, that he held himself to be good, since he persuaded himself that he had fulfilled what the law commanded. *Second*, that his aim was to attain eternal life, for which aim's sake, I think that Christ felt complacency in him, as is shown by St. Mark. *Third*, that he thought to attain eternal life by works; wherein he showed, that he neither knew himself, nor did he know God; for, had he known himself, and had he known God, it would have been impossible for him to entertain such a thought, as I have stated in a Consideration [cvii.]

Christ, answering the youth, "*Why callest thou Me good?*" &c., began to give him some knowledge of Himself, in order that he might lose the good opinion that he held of his own goodness, by considering: this person is better than me, and does not desire to be called good, therefore neither am I good, since God alone is so. Therefore, let us not

understand that Christ rebuked the youth because He called Him good, but because, not recognising Him to be more than man, he called Him good ; holding himself also to be good ; and *let us understand that, in the same manner that God is good, Christ is good ; that being in the Son which is in the Father ; because He is of the same substance as the Father.* And here I will say this : that it is as natural to God to be good, as it is natural to man (by birth), by human generation, to be bad ; it being natural to those to be good, who cease to be men, by death and resurrection with Christ, through faith and baptism, wherein Christian regeneration consists.

Christ, in saying, "*If thou wouldest enter,*" &c., answers him in the spirit of the time in which He spoke, in which the law was in all its glory and majesty, whilst the gospel had not as yet begun to be openly preached, for Christ had not yet been chastised for our sins ; and His answer meets his question. He asked, *What shall I do ?* and Christ answers him, Do this. The youth replying, "*Which ?*" it seems that he attached but little importance to the observance of the commandments of the decalogue, and that he wished to know whether there were other commandments to keep, whilst he rejoins, after having heard the commandments of the law, by saying, "*All this have I observed,*" &c., and showed his rashness by affirming that he had fulfilled the law.

Which rashness presents itself to me as so much the greater, when I recollect what David says, "*Who can understand his errors ?*" (Ps. xix. 12). And thus I understand that the saints of the world, persuading themselves that, by their moral life, they fulfil the will of God, they by so doing affirm that which the youth rashly affirmed when he said, "*All this have I kept ;*" whilst they, who are saints of God, knowing themselves and knowing God, are never persuaded that they fulfil the will of God, nay, they always say with David, "*Who can understand his errors ?*" And the more they possess of this knowledge,

so much the more do they hold themselves to be righteous, not in themselves, however, but in Christ.

But the rashness of this youth is more especially seen in his affirmation, that he had fulfilled the obligation of love to his neighbour, by loving him as himself; which was most false; for he had great possessions, and he was very sorrowful when he was told that he should sell them, and that he should give them to the poor, who were his neighbours; whilst, if he had loved them as himself, he either would not have had such great possessions, or he would have been happy to have sold them, when Christ told him to do so.

When he adds, "*What lack I yet?*" he showed that he was not yet fully assured in his conscience, although he had persuaded himself that he had fulfilled the law. And here it has to be considered, that, however much man may persuade himself of his own righteousness; doing so himself, he is always dissatisfied, for it seems to him that there is something wanting; for so it is, faith alone, that with which we embrace the righteousness of Christ, quiets the conscience, affirming to us that we fail in nothing.

Were I to state this, there would be nothing wrong in saying it, that this youth did not come to Christ to learn what he asked; but that Christ should hold him to be a saint and pronounce him to be so; and thus, I think, that in saying, "*What lack I yet?*" he thought that Christ would have to reply: thou lackest nothing, eternal life is thine, and thou canst justly ask it of God, and complain of Him, if He do not give it thee; since thou hast done all that it was thy duty to do; nay, I believe that the young man had no other design than this; and I think so, because I know that man, by nature, is full of vanity and presumption (Ps. lxii. 9), and I know that this vanity and this presumption is more natural to those, who are saints of the world, as was this youth.

To whom Christ replied most appositely, "*If thou wouldest be perfect, go;*" &c.; Christ knew him to be arro-

gant, for he was a saint of the world; and Christ knew him to be covetous, for he loved his riches; and, because Christ saw that he already held himself to be holy, Christ summons him to perfection in holiness; as though Christ had said, since it is, as thou sayest, that thou hast kept the commandments, if thou wilt keep them perfectly, sell thy estate, and give it to the poor, and thus shalt thou have treasures in heaven; having given them up to attain eternal life; and, having them in heaven, thou wilt also have thy heart in heaven, and, having done this, come and follow Me; for there is no other way by which thou wilt be able to be perfect. This, I think to be that, which Christ purposed to say to the youth.

And from it we may gather that it does not suffice that a man keep the commandments, even were it possible to keep them; neither does it suffice that he sell all that he has, and that he give it to the poor, but that he follow Christ, imitating His meekness, His humility of mind, His suffering, His patience, His obedience, and His charity. It may likewise be gathered from these words that the rich, who are so attached to their riches, that not to lose them, for they would indeed grieve to do that, they would cease to follow Christ; they are here admonished, that, not to be brought into this most terrible predicament, they should sell their possessions, liberate themselves from them, and divest themselves of them.

The youth showed himself when leaving Christ grieved and ill-pleased, the cause of his displeasure, being as already stated, his ownership of great possessions or inheritances; that he did not speak the truth, when he said, that from his youth, he had loved his neighbour as himself; and he showed that two passions strove within him, love of the life eternal with the love of riches; from this strife proceeded his grief, for he loved himself, and showed that, although the love of the life eternal was great, yet the love of riches was greater; since he would not, from love to the former, deprive himself of the latter. Whence

Christ took occasion to say to His disciples, "*Verily, I say unto you, it is hard for the rich,*" &c., where I understand "*the kingdom of heaven,*" to mean the control and government of the Holy Spirit, which is communicated to those who accept the gospel.

Seven reasons present themselves to my mind, suggesting why it is difficult for the rich man to enter into this kingdom of the heavens.

The *first* is, that worldly honour and esteem are annexed to riches, whilst worldly ignominy and reproach are annexed to the control of the Holy Spirit; and it is with the greatest difficulty that a rich man, who is honoured and esteemed by the world for his riches, submits himself, for Christ's sake, to be insulted and reproached by the world.

The *second* is, that the results of riches is outward welfare, wherein the man gratifies all his affections and all his appetites, by which he is the more stimulated in proportion as he has greater means to indulge them; whilst the result of the control of the Holy Spirit is to deprive the man of his satisfactions and of his comforts, by mortifying his affections and his appetites; whence it comes to pass that the man finds it so much the more difficult to submit himself to the mortification, with which a person lives in the kingdom of heaven, in proportion as his share in the riches of this world is larger.

The *third* is, that it being peculiar to riches to maintain man's body and his health in this present life, whilst it is peculiar to the kingdom of heaven that man should expect his maintenance from God only, it comes to pass that it is almost impossible for the rich man to expect his bodily maintenance from God only; bringing himself to a similar condition with that of the poor man, that depending upon God only, he should express himself in these or similar words: God, through Christ, has promised me, that whilst occupied in seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness, He will provide me with outward things; I go on

seeking them both, therefore I shall not want, even though all others should. For it seems to be peculiar to the poor to say and to feel this ; it is a fact that the rich never think that the necessities of life can fail them ; they remember, that with money, they can purchase them ; and therefore, although they say, "*Give us this day our daily bread,*" they say so from mere habit, and they say it, having been taught to do so ; and not because they expect maintenance from God, distrusting every other way of obtaining it.

The *fourth* is, that it being necessary for me, in order that I may enter into the kingdom of heaven, to divest myself of all the affection that I have for things of the world ; and riches being those that most attract us and affect us by the comforts which they procure for our enjoyment ; it comes to pass, that the more the riches that I possess, so much the greater is the difficulty that I find in losing my affection for them, in order that I may enter the kingdom of heaven free from all attachment to them.

The *fifth* is, that in proportion as a man has more things that please him and make him contented with the kingdom of the world, so much the more difficult is it for him to be disenamoured of them, in order that he may enter into the kingdom of God ; since it is a fact that, the richer a man is, so many the more things has he, which hold him imprisoned in the kingdom of the world ; it is also a fact, that so much the greater is the difficulty which he encounters in entering the kingdom of God, into which one enters, having lost the love of everything that is involved in the kingdom of the world.

The *sixth* thing is, that care stands associated with riches, whilst indifference is associated, by those who live in the kingdom of God, with everything that does not pertain to it ; whence it comes to pass that the greater a man's wealth, the more are his cares ; and the more cares he has, the greater difficulty has he to enter and to remain in the kingdom of heaven.

And the *seventh* is, that the rich man, persuaded by false religion, that man is justified by his alms and pious works, seeing that he can do many, does not think of getting that from God, which he persuades himself he can himself get; and thus he does not enter into the kingdom of God.

Where, should a rich man ask me, saying, since it is so difficult a thing for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God, with riches, do you advise me to get rid of my wealth? I shall reply, that he should not rid himself of his riches, until that having practised Christian life, and having experimentally learned that he cannot follow Christ, that he cannot remain in the kingdom of God, with wealth, he begin to desire to be set free from it, because of the difficulty he would find in retaining it, and in remaining with it in the kingdom of heaven; and *then* I will tell him to divest himself of all his riches; but, I shall tell him to pray to God, that God, by some expedient, take them from him, and that he be on the watch not to resist those men, who would take them, partly or wholly, from him, by whatever means; resting assured that it is not man who takes them, but that it is God, who does so, by man, His instrument; and that, in acting thus, he will gain this, that having wealth, he will have it without being attached to it; nay, that he will hold the possession of wealth to be a heavy cross, and, in losing it, he will be certain that he has not relinquished it from any whim of his own, but by the will of God; and thus, he will be most contented, as are Christians in everything that they know themselves to be, by the will of God; being most discontented with everything that they know themselves to be, by personal desire.

Should human prudence here, under pretext of piety, reclaim, and say, that it is better for a man to divest himself, than to allow himself to be divested; and that he should give his property to good men rather than that he should allow it to be taken away and usurped by bad

men: I shall in addition say, "let it say on and shout;" but let him follow this out, for the more contrary he acts to what human prudence approves, and to man's natural inclination, which delights in things done by its own will, and grieves and resents at those which it is constrained to do against its will, so much the better is it.

And reverting to Christ's words, I understand that He, purposing the more to enhance the difficulty of which He had spoken, added, "*And again I say unto you, it is easier,*" &c., and effectively it is so, for the reasons we have above noticed, when man alone, not being aided by Christ's Spirit, presumes to enter and to remain in the kingdom of God, to live like a Christian; whilst it is not so, when man accepts the grace of the gospel and receives therewith the Christian spirit, he goes on gradually to adopt Christian life, and he lives as one should live in the kingdom of God; for it is thus, that in such a person, the Spirit of God renders that possible which is naturally impossible. And for this reason meeting the disciples' amazement, Christ said, "*With men this is impossible,*" &c., whilst all things being possible to God; all things are possible to those who have the Spirit of God, as had St. Paul, when he said (Phil. iv. 13), "*I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me,*" whilst Christ saith (Mark ix. 22), "*all things are possible to him that believeth.*"

It seems to me that I may rest satisfied with the commentary upon these words, and, if it shall appear extraordinary to anybody that Christ should have invited this person to be His associate, knowing that he would not consent; whilst Christ had rejected the society of others, who desired to follow Him, let such an one know that Christ never purposed that this youth should be a follower of His, save to quell his arrogance, by giving him self-knowledge. And if, to another, it shall appear hard that Christ should put such difficulty in the way of a rich man's entrance into the kingdom of heaven, and then have to solve it, by saying, that what is impossible to men is

possible to God; since it appears that the same difficulty may be put in the way to everything else to which we men as men are attached; let him know that, because riches are those which most tyrannise over us, and those which keep the other affections of this present life alive within us, Christ, willing that we, who accept His gospel, should lose all the affection that we have to everything of the present life, in order that we make room for the affection that we ought to have for things of the life eternal, He puts all this difficulty in the way of the rich man's entrance into the kingdom of heaven. Now the rich man is he, who is affectionately devoted to his property, be it little or much; whilst, on the contrary, he is poor, who has lost all affection for all that he possesses.

As to the text, where it says, "*but one, and He God,*" it means, but one, and this is God. By that, "*thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not steal,*" &c., it is to be understood that Christ repeats the very words of the law. By what it here says, "*What lack I yet?*" the Greek of the text says, "*what more then?*" but it signifies, "*what more do I need?*" And by what it says, "*thy estate, thy effects,*" the Greek says, "*what thou hast,*" and means thy possessions. Where it says "*that thing,*" the Greek says, "*that saying,*" but as a Hebraism, it means "*thing.*" By "*camel*" some understand a ship's rope, but it is of no importance; all that needs to be understood is, that Christ designed to indicate the impossibility.

That expression, "*And Jesus looking upon His disciples,*" may be understood as indicating that Jesus looked upon His disciples that they might be more attentive to that which He wished to say to them, and that they might be more capable of receiving it; it being of great importance to them to know that God can do everything, in order that their minds might be tranquillised, by considering, that just as to God all things are possible, so to them, as children of God, all things are possible. And there is no doubt, but that, if this truth were well impressed upon

our minds, we, who, feeling our incorporation into Christ, know for certain that we are the children of God, holding for certain that to us all things are possible, we should never doubt about anything, and much less, than of all other things taken together, of our reconciliation with God, and, therefore, of our resurrection to immortality and to eternal life.

They, who are uncertain about this, testify concerning themselves that they do not believe that to God all things are possible; and, if they say they do believe it, whilst they are uncertain about this, they show that they do not believe that to Christ all things are possible, or, that they do not hold themselves to be incorporated into Christ, and, by degrees, they come to confess that they have not the Spirit of Christ, and that, in point of fact, they are not Christians. Since it is a fact that they, who are Christians, have the Spirit of Christ, they are incorporated into Christ, they are mighty through Christ, just as Christ is mighty through God; and thus they are certain that, through Christ, all things are possible to them, and that principally they can conquer themselves, the world, the devil, hell, and death, and thus attain immortality and eternal life with Christ Himself.

**XIX. 27-30.**—Then answered Peter and said unto him, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee; what then shall we have? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath left houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit eternal life.

But many shall be last that are first; and first that are last.

Peter, reflecting that the youth, when he heard Christ say "leave all and follow me," would not do either the one or the other, began to consider how he and his companions had done both; and he began to think more highly of it than he previously did; and, therefore, he asked Christ, saying, "*Lo, we have left all,*" &c., meaning, we have done that which thou toldest the youth that he should do, "*what, then, shall we have?*" from which question I gather that the disciples followed Christ simply without having been moved by any ulterior purpose, to follow Him; having been moved only by Christ's outward call, and by the inward inspiration of God.

And I hold it to be certain that the experience of Christ's disciples, in following Christ, is realised by all those, who follow Christ, having the same call and inspiration; I mean to say that just as the disciples followed Christ without ulterior purpose, so they all follow Christ without any personal ulterior purpose. I likewise hold it for certain that what occurred and what will occur to these disciples, in following Christ, does occur and will occur to all, who follow Christ, without ulterior purpose, as did these disciples; I mean to say, that just as these disciples, in following Christ, have attained and will attain beyond all comparison much more than they, prompted by any ulterior purpose, could have imagined; so likewise they, who shall follow Christ as they did, shall attain, in the present life and in the future, much more than they, by any ulterior purpose, could have imagined.

And here I understand two things. The *one*, that they who shall find themselves in the way to Christ, following Christ, and shall know that they did not enter on it with any ulterior purpose, but simply by the outward call of the Gospel, which calls us all to Christ, and by inward

inspiration ; they will be able to certify themselves that they are really disciples of Christ. And the *other*, that they, who, in following Christ, shall find on their way things that they never thought of finding, may rest assured that they will find in the life eternal greater happiness than any they are able to imagine in the present life. Thus it is a good token, that the disciples, having left all that they had to follow Christ, should not have known what awaited them, although it seems that the desire to know it has a savour of curiosity in it ; which I do not understand to have been bad in the disciples, considering that its result was that they were thereby confirmed in and certified of, their happiness, by Christ's reply ; which confirmation and voucher could not make them either insolent or vicious, as it would have done had they been moved to follow Christ by any personal motive.

And here I understand that to them, who follow Christ as did these disciples, the assurance of their glorification makes them more modest and loving, more humble and more careful, in following Christ, in imitating Christ ; but they, who have not experienced it, do not believe this truth ; and are therefore unwilling that man be assured in the present life of his glorification ; acting wrongly to the Gospel of Christ, and wresting Christ's words ; they would fain make the words say what He never wished that they should ; as in this instance, where they would fain make Christ in His reply speak conditionally : if you shall persevere in that which you have commenced, &c.

And if any one shall say that if Christ had said these words without this condition, they would not have been true in Judas ; I shall reply, that Christ addressed them to those, who believed them, in whom they were true, as they will also be true in all, who shall believe them ; and that He did not address them to Judas, who never believed them, because, had he believed them, he would not have sold Christ, postponing the felicity which Christ

here propounded for so very low a price; nay, belief in them would have been as efficacious in him as in the other disciples, to mortify them, and thus to make them perpetually persevere in Christ.

And coming to the exposition of the words, it must be considered that the disciples in having propounded two things to Christ: the *one*, that we have left everything; and the *other*, and we have followed Thee; Christ, in replying to them, takes first the more important, which comes after the former, and says, "*You who have followed Me, &c.*, showing that that which is of importance is to follow Him, and not the leaving of everything.

That expression "*in the regeneration*," may be combined with what precedes, so that it may say: you who have followed, and do follow Me, in the state of regeneration, meaning that Christian one which the Christian spirit works in us, you shall in the state of resurrection, be seated upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel; it may also be combined with what follows, so that it may say: you, who have followed Me in the present life, at the resurrection, which will be a new generation, you shall sit, &c.; this second interpretation appears to be the clearer, but, considering that Holy Scripture calls the state of Christians in the present life, that of regeneration; calling their state in the life eternal that of resurrection, the first interpretation contents me, and is countenanced by that expression of St. Paul in Titus iii. 5; "*by the washing of regeneration*," &c., and that of St. Peter (i. 3), "*who hath regenerated us (begotten us again) unto a living hope*." "*Upon the throne of His glory*," is tantamount to, upon His glorious throne; it is thus that He designates the glory and the majesty with which He will come at the day of judgment.

When Christ says, "*the twelve tribes of Israel*," I think His meaning to be, that the apostles, being Jews, shall condemn the infidelity of the Jews; just as they, who, from amongst the Gentiles, shall accept the Gospel, will

condemn the infidelity of those Gentiles who shall not have accepted it, so that the word "*judging*," is equivalent to condemning.

Christ having replied to the important part of the disciples' proposition, and proceeding to answer the other part, says: "*And every one that shall have forsaken*," &c., meaning, that he, who in order to follow Christ, whether to preach the gospel, or to teach Christian life, whether to imitate Christ, or to live like a Christian, shall actually deprive himself of these things, or of one, or of some of them, as obstructing him; just as the disciples deprived themselves of their things, because, that retaining them, they could not follow Christ, he shall be largely rewarded by God in the present life and in the future one; in the present one, for that he shall be enriched with spiritual gifts, things pertaining to the present life shall be given in to him, by way of addition; whilst in the future life, he shall, as a member of Christ, made a child of God, attain the inheritance of God, which is eternal life with Christ Himself. Here it will be convenient to remark that there are two ways for a man to leave everything in order to follow Christ.

The *one* is by losing attachment to them, and this generally concerns all; I mean to say that it concerns all Christians to lose attachment to all these things, losing the affection which they naturally had for them, so that in being attached to them their attachment is no longer natural, but spiritual; and this is conformable with what St. Paul says (1 Cor. vii. 29), "*It remaineth, that they that have wives, be as though they had none.*" The *other* is actually to get rid of them, and this particularly concerns those, who, as to houses and inheritances, resemble the Jew of whom the evangelist has just spoken; whom it concerns actually to get rid of their riches; and it likewise concerns those, who are so attached to their relatives, that to fulfil their obligations to them, they cease to discharge the obligations of Christian regeneration, or

they discharge them less fully than they ought. And I recollect having treated this subject in a reply [No. xxi.]. As to the husband actually leaving his wife, or, as to the wife actually leaving the husband, I remit myself to what St. Paul says in 1 Cor. vii.

In that expression, "*Shall receive a hundredfold*," I understand a finite number for an infinite; and effectively it is so, that every one, who for Christ's sake, in order to follow and to imitate Christ, to teach Christian life, or to preach the gospel of Christ, deprives himself, as we have said, of all these things, which Christ here enumerates, issues in having much more than he leaves; for he has all that, which all the members of Christ have, and has as many brothers, as many sisters, as many fathers, as many mothers, and as many children, as there are members of Christ; this is in the present life, as is pointed out by St. Mark x. 29; whilst in the future life, Christ says, that they, who shall have left these things, in order to follow Him, shall attain life eternal, not for that which they have left, but for the end for which they have left it, which is to follow Christ.

And therefore Christ added, "*But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first*," meaning, that many, who shall think to be first in the life eternal, because that, in their opinion, they will have left much, shall be last; whilst that many, who shall think to be last, for that, in their opinion, they will have left but little, shall be first. Where it is not to be understood that some will precede others, in the life eternal, but that some will be admitted to it, whilst others will be excluded from it; but as in that passage, in St. Matt. xxi. 31, where Christ says, that "*the publicans and the harlots shall precede you in the kingdom of heaven*," He does not mean that they shall have a better place than the Pharisees, but that they shall be admitted into the kingdom, whilst the Pharisees will be excluded; and I have indicated this mode of speaking practised by Christ in my observa-

tions upon that passage in chapter v., "*he shall be called least,*" &c.

"*The first, who shall be last,*" I understand that they will be of those, of whom Christ speaks, who will say to Him at the day of judgment, "*Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name,*" &c., whilst the last that shall be first, I understand, will be of those, who will say to Christ at the day of judgment, "*Lord, when saw we Thee hungry,*" &c., to whom Christ will reply, that what they have done to one of His, they have done it to Him.

## CHAPTER XX.

XX. 1-16.—For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into the vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing in the market-place idle; and to them he said, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle; and he saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard. And when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and pay them their hire, beginning from the last, unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. And when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they received it, they murmured against the householder, saying, These last have spent but

one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat. But he answered and said to one of them, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take up that which is thine, and go thy way; it is my will to give unto this last even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? or is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first and the first last: for many are called, but few chosen.

From the words, whence it seems, that Christ took occasion to utter this parable, and from the words with which it concludes, which are the same as that addition, *viz.*, "*Many are called, but few chosen,*" it is readily inferred, that it is His intention to show how the first shall be last, and the last first. Where it is to be understood that the householder is God; the vineyard is the Church; which, as Christ has showed in other parables, comprises good and bad; the labourers, who go to dig the vineyard, are we all; and the householder's steward is Christ. And it is so, that all who enter into the Church, enter, being called of God, but some are so with only the outward calling, which is the preaching of the gospel, whilst others are so, both outwardly and inwardly.

They, who enter with only the outward call, believing by report, they never understand the righteousness of Christ, and, pretending to attain eternal life by their works, labouring and wearying themselves by day and by night, they find themselves to be so rich in outward works, that they hold themselves to be the first in the kingdom of God; whilst those, who enter with the outward and with the inward call, believing by revelation, they embrace the righteousness of Christ, and, as they do not work in order

to be righteous, but because they are righteous, however much they may work, it always appears to them that they work but little, and thus they hold themselves to be last in the kingdom of God; but, when Christ shall come to judgment, He will admit those, who hold themselves to be last, and He will cast out from the kingdom those, who hold themselves to be first; disregarding the amount of works done by both, but regarding the faith and the intention with which they will have worked. Whence will result the murmurs of those, who will be excluded from the kingdom, who will plead their good works; but their pleas will profit them but little.

Thus do I understand this whole parable, considering in the murmurers, the peculiar plight of saints of the world, who hold themselves, and are held by men, to be the first; and, considering in the others, the peculiar plight of the saints of God, who hold themselves, and are held by men, to be the last; and, considering the goodness and liberality of God (exemplified) in the householder, and, understanding that, in the many who are called, they are comprised, who only have the outward call; and that, in the few chosen, they are comprised, who have both the one and the other. Where, if it shall appear strange to any one that we understand that the first, (of whom Christ speaks, saying they shall be last,) will be excluded from the kingdom, let him read Luke xiii. 6-9, where he will see that these words of Christ cannot be understood otherwise.

And if, to another, it shall appear hard that this parable does not harmonise in many things, and chiefly in this, that the murmurs of the first were not because they were not paid, but because they were placed upon the same footing with the others, let him read in Matthew xiii. 24-40, Christ's exposition of the parable of the tares, and, finding that the exposition does not harmonise in every detail with the parable, nor even with what we might have thought to have been its design, as I have shown in my Commentary

upon it, he should not marvel, nay, he will know, that parables, being taken from human things in order to explain divine ones, whilst they differ exceedingly each from the other, it fully suffices that they harmonise in the main design.

Here I will add two things. The *one*, that this is ever thus, that they, who, according to human judgment, are first, for that they are very rich in outward works, are, according to divine judgment, last, for they work without faith; and just as faith, without works of faith, is nothing worth; so works without faith are worth nothing; whilst, on the other hand, they, who, according to human judgment, are last, as being poor in outward works, are, according to the divine judgment, first, because they have faith, which is efficient in their hearts to bring them that in working they work from pure love; whilst a work, in itself small, wrought in faith, is worth more than a hundred thousand great ones without faith. And the *other*, that they, who work without faith, working from self-love, are always rash, presumptuous, and murmurers; whilst that they, who work with faith, working from pure love to God, are always modest, humble, and silent; these testify concerning themselves that they are the saints of God; whilst those bear testimony concerning themselves that they are saints of the world, and therefore they will be condemned with the world.

XX. 17-19.—And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples apart, and in the way he said unto them, Behold we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests and scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him unto the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify: and the third day he shall be raised up.

In chapter xvi. 21 and 22, we have already seen, in an address made by Christ to His disciples, a passage couched in almost the same words as our text, only they are in this latter somewhat clearer, for in saying "*He shall be delivered up to the chief priests*," &c., and afterwards "*they shall deliver Him unto the Gentiles*, &c., He shows that He was about to be sold and placed in the hands of those, who, amongst the Jews, held the highest rank in sanctity and letters; and that they were about to condemn Him as worthy of death, and that they, being unable to be His executioners, were about to place Him in the hands of Pontius Pilate and of his officers, in order that they should be His executioners, preluding the grief and pangs of death by mockery and scourging; whilst the kind of death was in itself most cruel and most terrible; Christ condescending to the weakness of His disciples, intimates resurrection as associated with death.

Where I understand that whenever the cross of Christ is propounded to those, who accept the grace of the gospel—the cross being that to which they all bind themselves to suffer with Him—Christ's resurrection ought always to be propounded along with it; showing them that it is so, that none will participate in the joy of Christ's resurrection, save those, who have experienced, little or much, the cross of Christ in the present life; now we experience the cross of Christ, when devoting ourselves to Christian faith and to Christian life, we are murmured against, or despised, or persecuted, or martyred, by men of the world. And I feel assured that there is not a man of those, who devote themselves to Christian faith and to Christian life, that does not, to some great extent, experience this cross; I feel assured of this by my own experience, and by what Paul says in 2 Tim. iii. 12, "*All those, who will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution*," which sentence has been, is, and will be true, until the end of the world; and he that does not experience this

persecution and contradiction for Christ's sake, will I think be at a loss when he looks for assurance that he lives godly in Christ.

XX. 20-23.—Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou ? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with ? They say unto him, We are able. And he said unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with : but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them, for whom it is prepared of my Father.

Christ having intimated His death and His resurrection to His disciples, it appears that the two sons of Zebedee thought that the time had already come to ask favours of Christ; and they asked their mother, that she should speak on their behalf; Matthew reports that she came humbly to Christ and asked Him some favour, and that when Christ told her to ask what she wanted, she asked Him for the two first places in His kingdom for her two sons,—this is what I understand by sitting one on Thy right and one on Thy left, on Thy right hand and on Thy left. Where it is worth the while to consider how little were the two disciples mortified, since their designs were such, and that they, moreover, imagined that the kingdom of Christ resembled the kingdoms of the world, not even

yet understanding, that though in the life eternal Christ's kingdom consists in glory, that in the present life it consists in reproach; forasmuch as the world holds and judges it to be ignominious and matter of reproach to be in the kingdom of Christ, by accepting of the righteousness of Christ, and by studying the imitation of Christ.

From what Christ says in His reply, "*You know not what you ask*," two things are to be understood: *the one*, that Christ knowing the request did not proceed from the mother but from the sons, He did not answer her, but them; and *the other*, that He wished to show them that His withholding their request did not proceed from any failure on His part, but from ignorance on theirs, which had prompted them to make an impudent request.

Christ subjoining, "*Can you drink the cup*," &c., showed them very clearly that the way to the glory of His kingdom is necessarily by that of reproach, travelling the way by which He went; I mean to say, that only they will enjoy Christ's glory, who will have tasted and experienced the reproach of Christ. Where it is not to be understood that the glory is given as a premium for reproach, but that reproach is the way by which one goes to glory, just as it is, that by sweat one goes to victory; for victory is not given on account of the sweat, but they must needs sweat, who would come forth victorious.

"*Cup*" is equivalent to lot or part. Holy Scripture occasionally employs the word in a bad sense, as in that passage in Psalm xi. 6, where "*fire, brimstone, and a horrible tempest are represented as being the portion of the cup of the wicked*;" and in that, in Isaiah li. 17, where Jerusalem is represented as having "*drunk the cup of the Lord's fury*;" whilst at other times it is employed in a good sense, as in Psalm xvi. 5: "*The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup*," and then in Psalm xxiii. 5, "*My cup runneth over*." Adding, "*And with the baptism with which I am baptized*," &c., which expounds what I have stated, mean-

ing that His cup was His death and passion, and that His baptism was the same as His cup, so that they drink Christ's cup and are baptized with Christ's baptism, who being baptized in the present life, are reproached and martyred for Christ's sake, for that of Christian faith, and for that of Christian life.

The disciples, in answering, "*We can*," admitted that the request proceeded from themselves, and fully proved the desire they had to obtain that which their mother had requested for them; affirming that they had courage enough to go through, they knew not what; and that they were able to do that, which they could not, as they proved when they fled, as did the other disciples; for had they been able to do what they thought, they would not have fled; and such as were these two disciples of Christ at that time, who persuaded themselves that they were able to do that which they could not, (though indeed after that they had received the Holy Spirit they were enabled,) are all they, who self-reliantly persuade themselves that they can do great things, and afterwards fall in little ones; who never would be able to do that, which they persuade themselves they can do, unless God in His mercy send them His Holy Spirit.

Christ, in replying, "*Ye shall indeed drink of my cup*," &c., prophesied the martyrdom of the two disciples, and confirmed the sentence of predestination, by stating that God has already prepared the places that every one will occupy in the heavenly kingdom. And this humble reply of Christ's is well worthy of consideration, in which He attributes to the Father only, the prerogative of granting and of distributing grades of glory; as though He had said, it is my function to acquire eternal life for you, to habilitate you to share in my Father's inheritance, in my Father's kingdom; whilst it is my Father's prerogative to give those places which you solicit, and He will give them to those, to whom, in His divine mind, He has determined to give them.

Here it will be apposite to repeat this, that he, who holds it to be certain and sure that God has prepared him a place in the life eternal, strives to live in the present life with that purity, righteousness, and holiness, with which he will live in the life eternal; and that he, who does not so strive, testifies concerning himself that he has not the assurance; so that the assurance is most efficient instrumentally in promoting mortification; whilst mortification, with meek and humble life, is a great token of assurance. Whenever in the life of Christ His humility and obedience to God are brought before us, there should be brought before us too, how much it behoved Him to be humble and obedient, since He came to restore that which Adam had lost by pride and by disobedience.

XX. 24-28.—And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister. And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

From the circumstance that the ten disciples resented the ambitious request of the two, wherein they showed that they desired to be elevated above the others, we gain this most necessary reply of Christ, which I understand concerned the apostles at the time, in which, having received the Holy Spirit, they found themselves and knew themselves to be in the kingdom of Christ; which also

concerns all those, who having received the same spirit, find themselves and know themselves to be in the same kingdom, who are all apprised by these words that he ranks first and is chief in the kingdom of Christ, who is most like to Christ; especially so in this, that just as Christ came not into the world to be ministered unto, to be honoured, prized, or esteemed, but to minister, His ministry consisting in His giving His life for the lives of many, He dying in order that He might raise many to life eternal; so he that is in the kingdom of Christ is not to expect to be ministered unto, to be honoured, prized, or esteemed for the rank that he holds in the kingdom, but to minister; his ministry being constituted in his laying down his life and everything else in order to preach the gospel to others, to teach them Christian life, and thus to assist them to the enjoyment of "*the benefit of Christ.*"

Where I understand that they, who in this manner imitate Christ, in ministering as He ministered, can say with Paul (Col. i. 24), "*that they fill up on their part of that which lacked in the passion of Christ, for His body's sake, which is the Church,*" since it is a fact that Christ, in dying, ransomed the lives of all, whilst they, in preaching and teaching, and in suffering all that occurs to them when they preach and teach, are instrumental in bringing many to enjoy the ransom of Christ; and this is peculiarly Christian ministry, into which ambition does not enter, nor is there aught that savours of it therein.

They who affect primacy and to be princes in the kingdom of Christ, testify concerning themselves that they are not yet in the kingdom of Christ; or, that allowing themselves to be conquered by their affections, they are weak and imperfect, and therefore that they are not first but last. When Christ says, "*Ye know that heathen princes,*" &c., He designs to show the difference there is between the kingdom of the world and the kingdom of God, which is the kingdom of Christ; for that in the kingdom of the world they are the greatest and rank highest, who are

ministered unto, and who hold men subject to their tyranny ; whilst in the kingdom of God, in the Christian church, they are the greatest and rank highest, who most minister, and who, on that account, are by men the most oppressed and the worst treated.

Where Christ says, "*Even as the Son of man*," &c., He invites us to imitate Him, that we should in the present life aim at the greatness at which He aimed ; that we should live as He lived ; that we should follow that which He followed ; and that we should die as He died, giving, by His death, life to many. Christ indeed by His death gave life to all men, for that God slew all in Him, and in Him God has raised us all ; but, because only they will enjoy this resurrection, who shall hold themselves to be dead in Christ and to be risen in Christ, Holy Scripture states in some passages that Christ died for many, having regard to the result ; whilst it states in other passages that He died for all, having regard to the act. Here it is to be noted that these, Christ's words, do not remove dominion or pre-eminence from amongst Christians, either in temporalities, or in Christian life, for Christ was above the disciples, by whom He was called Lord.

XX. 29-34.—And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him. And behold two blind men sitting by the wayside, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David. And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace : but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David. And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you ? They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be

opened. So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

Had these two blind men not known their blindness, they would not have asked soundness (of vision), and had they not very greatly desired soundness, they would not have been thus importunate in asking it; and at the least, having been rebuked, they would have been silent, and thus they would not have recovered the sight of their eyes. Precisely thus does it happen to men; and thus it is, that they, who do not know themselves to be blind, do not ask God to open their inward eyes; whilst they, who know themselves to be blind, if they do not very strongly desire to see, they are not importunate in prayer, and thus neither these nor those recover sight; whilst they only do recover sight, who, by the gift of God, know themselves to be blind, and, imitating these two blind men, ask of Christ importunately that He cure them; and they never desist from asking, however much men of the world or hellish fiends rebuke them and interrupt them; nay, they are so much the more impetuous and the more importunate in asking, in proportion as they are the more rebuked and interrupted. Christ opens the inward eyes of such, and they, recognising Christ by them, follow Christ, imitating Christ. And here I understand that none follow Christ, save those, who, having, by the benefit of Christ, recovered their inward sight, begin to know Christ.

## CHAPTER XXI.

XXI. 1-17.—And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. And the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them, and brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multi-

tude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee. And Jesus went into the temple of God and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves. And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves. And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them. And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased. And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise? And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there.

It appears to me that Christ manifested more majesty in this His entry into Jerusalem and into the temple, than in any one of the many things that He did; which majesty presents itself so much the greater as I see it the more blended with the most profound humility. Very great majesty was incident to the entry into Jerusalem with the ceremony of boughs (as at the feast of tabernacles) which the Jews were wont to make in the seventh month, agreeably with the prescript given them in Leviticus xxiii. 38, 44, together with the acclamations of Hosanna, which the Jews had associated with the ceremony of the boughs, as appears by their histories; whilst there was very great humility, when entering with that majesty, to enter riding upon an ass, precisely as the prophet

Zechariah had seen Him enter, when he said in chapter ix. 9, "Tell the daughter of Sion," &c. There was also very great majesty in Christ's entry into the temple of Jerusalem, making the upset which He did, and uttering the words which He spoke; whilst, very great was the humility with which He went forth, outside the city, that night, not desiring to carry out, as one might say, the victory over the rulers of the synagogue.

Such is the mode in which I envisage it generally, and, proceeding to particulars, I understand that Christ, in sending the two disciples, with all those incidents, in order that they should bring Him the ass and her colt whereon to enter Jerusalem, designed to certify them, and to confirm them, in the faith and in the estimate which they ought to hold of Him; of His omnipotence, for they saw that nothing resisted His will; and of His truth, for they saw that all that He said was verified.

In that expression, "*The Lord hath need of them*," it might seem strange to some, that Christ, who was humility itself, in speaking of Himself should call Himself, Lord; but if we consider, that it was necessary that Christ should express the very words to the disciples which they had to say, it will not appear strange, especially since it was less likely that Christ should enter into any ambition as to the titles that men should give Him, than that the ocean should overflow its limits, because a rivulet discharged itself into it.

In that, "*And all this was done*," &c., the evangelist means, that what Christ here did, harmonised with the prophecy of Zechariah; not that He did it, having regard to what Zechariah had said; nay, Zechariah had said it, because Christ was about to do it; and he, who should have eyes to compare what he saw in Christ with Zechariah's words, might well know that Christ was the Messiah, being that person of whom Zechariah spoke, who according to the Hebrew text [for Matthew follows the Greek, the Septuagint] speaks thus (Zech ix. 9), "*Rejoice*

greatly, O daughter of Zion ; shout for joy, O daughter of Jerusalem ; behold thy King cometh unto thee, He is just and having salvation ; lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." Whilst further on he says, " And His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth." Where I understand that this glorious entry of Christ into Jerusalem, being shown in vision to the prophet, he, thoroughly glad and contented, began to say, " Rejoice greatly," &c., calling Jerusalem, which was situate upon Mount Zion, daughter of Zion ; and calling the Christian Church, which sprang up in Jerusalem, for it was there that the preaching of the Gospel commenced, daughter of Jerusalem.

I understand the words, "*being just and having salvation*," to be equivalent to "*free from all sin*," wherein consists Christ's glory, nay rather our own, for we base our righteousness and our innocence upon the righteousness and innocence of Christ ; resting assured that God's chastisement, which He laid upon Christ, was not because He had sinned, but because He had taken our sins upon Himself ; recognising Himself and finding Himself to be as guilty before God for each one of them, as though He had really committed them all. [See Consideration lxxxii.]

In that, "*lowly and riding*," &c., we may consider that the prophet aptly combined humility with riding upon an ass. The foal of an ass, that had been broken in, spoken of by the evangelist, differs in nothing from the foal of an ass spoken of by the prophet.

From Mark's narrative (xi. 1-7), it is to be understood that Christ entered riding upon the ass' colt, possibly signifying His superiority over Christians, who recognise no other Lord than Christ. In those words, "*His dominion shall be from sea to sea*," Zechariah intimated or prophesied that Christ's kingdom has to extend over the whole world ; I do not say the temporal and outward but the spiritual and inward ; for He has absolute power in heaven and on earth. Thus do I understand

Zechariah's prophecy, which well agrees with the evangelist's quotation.

It will appear strange to some that where in the prophecy it says, "*having salvation*," that it should not say Saviour, not considering that what would be understood by saying Saviour is understood by saying "*thy King*," for the Messiah is so called; neither considering that the "*just one*," combined with "*the one having salvation*," agree well together, it being usual with the prophets, when they desire to enhance a thing, to combine two words that signify the same thing and to repeat the same sentence twice, using different words.

This same prophecy greatly scandalises the Jews, that it should state that their King comes riding upon an ass; and they cannot make out how this riding upon an ass can agree with their Messiah; and this sets their imagination straining at strange things; because, Christ's two states, the humble and the glorious, are beyond their comprehension; they do not know how to distinguish between the prophecies that speak of Christ; those which speak of Him in a state of humiliation, and those which speak of Him in a state of glorification; which two states are so blended in the prophets, that it seems they both were presented to them combined, in order that they should speak of them both in combination, as though they were one; as though God willed to deceive human prudence, by causing it to come to pass that the more it studied the Scriptures, the more it should find itself in the dark in relation to them.

As to the ceremony of the boughs, I have already said that they referred to the feast (of tabernacles) which they held in the seventh month; and it is truly something divine, that those multitudes, without knowing what they did, should have done in honour of Christ what they did in honour of God, adding thereto the casting of their garments on the road; a ceremony taken I know not where; but it pleases me to consider Christ, who, as to Himself,

humbled Himself by riding upon an ass, whilst as to the multitudes, He was exalted by all those ceremonies to the best of their ability; by the boughs, by their garments, and by the exclamations, which they shouted; Hosanna, which is tantamount to help us now; and, by adding, "*Thou Son of David,*" they confessed Christ to be the Messiah, as we have previously seen. And by saying, "*Blessed be He that cometh,*" &c., they confirmed the opinion they held, that He was the Messiah, sent by God to redeem Israel; but not as they thought, from the tyranny of men in the present life; but from the tyranny of the flesh, of the devil, of hell, and of death, to life eternal; which liberation they begin to feel in the present life, who have to enjoy it in the life eternal. Repeating their Hosanna with that "*in the highest,*" I think that they meant that their voices should ascend on high, so that they should be heard of God.

And it is to be understood that, to shout Hosanna, is the same as though they had cried out God save the King, which we are in the habit of doing when the King enters any place. And also, that these words with which the multitudes honoured Christ are taken from Psalm cxviii. 25, 26, where there is a verse that says, "*I beseech Thee, O Lord, save now: I beseech Thee, O Lord, prosper now: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*" Where remitting myself to my Commentary upon this psalm, I will say this; that it would have been the greatest happiness of those multitudes had they known what they did and what they said; knowing that they were inspired by God to do it and to say it; as it will be our greatest happiness, when, being inspired by God, as were they, we shall know that that is inspiration of God, and we shall embrace it; our happiness consisting in that we shall know both the omnipotence of God and of Christ; the power of their inspirations within us; and we shall thus be the more certified of our justification, resurrection, and glorification.

The disturbance or movement and tumult which then was in Jerusalem upon Christ's entrance, with glory and with majesty, blended with lowliness and with humility, typify to me the disturbance, the movement, and the tumult which takes place in every one of those, in whom the Spirit of Christ enters, with inward glory and majesty, blended with external lowliness and humility, for that such an one is rendered humble and lowly by the self-knowledge then imparted to him; whilst the disturbance that there was amongst the citizens is typified by the affections and the lusts which are after the flesh, all of which resent the entrance of the Spirit of Christ.

From the reply made by those, who came with Christ, to them in the city, saying, "*This is Jesus the prophet,*" &c., it appears, that without knowing what they did, they attributed to Christ more than what they actually held and believed concerning Him.

In the authority and majesty with which Christ cast out of the temple those who bought and sold, without any one presenting himself to desire Him not to do it, I consider Christ as much more glorious than when I consider Him transfigured upon Mount Tabor; holding it to be certain that, if those multitudes had not seen in Him more than they had been wont to see on other occasions, they would not have allowed Him thus to carry out that severity which He exercised upon them.

Those words, with which Christ stopped the mouths of the High priests and learned Jews, by saying to them, "*My house shall be called a house of prayer,*" are taken from Isaiah lvi.; whilst Christ, by adding, "*but you have made it a den of thieves,*" means, that the temple being the house of God, where adoration and prayer should be offered to God, they had rendered it as pernicious as a den of thieves; for that, just as evil-doers, highwaymen, assemble in their cave, so they, who tyrannised over and robbed the people of God, assembled themselves in the temple; for that in the temple, under the pretence of the

temple, feigning religion and sanctity, they robbed the poor, stripping men of their property, in order to increase the treasures and riches of the temple.

Christ, by curing those in the temple, the blind and the lame, who came to Him, confirmed the opinion which the multitudes held of Him, and gave occasion to the High priests and scholars, who then ranked highest for external sanctity, to discover the malignity of their minds, by asking Christ if He heard what the multitudes said, pretending to tell Him that He did wrong to consent to it; for that, according to them, the people assigned to Him that which did not belong to Him; just as if, the saints of the world, hearing that one of those, who, in Christ, are saints of God, called by other men just and holy, they would wish to show him up as proud and impious, because he consents that they should attribute to him that, which, according to them, does not belong to him, for that they judge him by what they see in him.

Where I understand that just as Christ was not offended by that which the multitudes attributed to Him, for He knew that to be in Himself which those saints of the world did not know; neither did that elate Him with pride, which would have elated those saints of the world; so that holiness and righteousness which is attributed to members of Christ does not offend them, for they know themselves to be incorporated into Christ, and therefore to be just and holy in Christ; neither does this elate them with pride, as it would elate the saints of the world, for they do not recognise themselves to be righteous or holy in themselves, but in Christ.

And I understand too, that just as Christ defended those who praised Him, by quoting David's words, so the members of Christ can defend those, who praise them, by quoting Paul's words, nay, those of Christ Himself, where in John xvii. He speaks of the union there is betwixt Himself and His members. And I understand, that Christ in quoting these words, "*Out of the mouths of*

*babes*,” &c., intended to say, these do not praise Me, but they praise God in Me and by Me, and their praise is acceptable to God; and that this is so, appears from what David says, that God makes His praise to be perfect and entire, by opening the mouths of children that they should praise Him; and they were all children, who addressed these words to Christ, for it was not they, who spake them, but the Spirit of God in them, whilst they did not understand what they said.

And here I understand, that we, who are just born again in Christ, are children, whilst we love, believe, hope, and desire, not knowing what we love, believe, hope, or desire, although the Holy Spirit, who inspires us, and moves us to love, believe, hope, and desire, does know; for it is He, who being in us, does love, believe, hope and desire. And I understand that in proportion as we become capable of comprehending what we love, believe, hope and desire, knowing it and understanding it, so do we go on to grow in Christ until that we become entire and perfect men in Christ. That which here according to the Greek text is rendered “*hast perfected praise*,” is rendered in the Hebrew “*hast ordained strength*,” as to the exposition of which I remit myself to what I have said upon Psalm viii.

XXI. 18-22.—Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away. And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away! Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall

not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also, if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

When I read that Christ hungered, I know that He was, by human generation, subject to the miseries, to which our flesh is subject whilst it is passible and mortal; and when I see Christ go to the fig tree in quest of figs, and when I see that He found none, and that He cursed the fig tree, and that the fig tree withered, which excited wonder in the disciples, and that thus Christ found occasion to enhance faith and prayer with faith, I am led to understand that Christ did not go to the fig tree, thinking to find figs on it, for He well knew that it had none, it not being the season for figs, as is reported by St. Mark; but He sought opportunity to say to the disciples what He told them about faith, and prayer in faith, which was strengthened by the incident of the fig tree.

It was Christ's design, as we have on other occasions stated, to show His disciples that they were incredulous, wanting in faith, in order that they might be moved to ask Him to increase it in them; and here I repeat that it concerns every Christian to hold himself to be incredulous and wanting in faith, so long as he has not enough, that he therewith can move mountains, in order that he may ask to have his faith increased.

*I likewise state that prayer without faith is worthless; and that my prayer is in faith, when I hold it to be certain that God will give me what I ask; and I state, that whenever I recognise this inward assurance, I can rest assured that I pray, being inspired and not taught.* [See Consideration lix.] And therefore what Christ says is most certain, that we obtain from God all that we ask of Him, when assured that He is about to give us it; for then

we ask inspired and not taught; we ask according to the will of God, and not from our own suggestions; they, who ask being taught and from their own promptings, cannot possibly ask in faith.

*Where He says, "And doubt not," the Greek word signifies, to examine, to vacillate in faith, as we do, when desirous of obtaining something from God, and looking to ourselves, we ask hesitatingly, partly on account of the imperfection we recognise in ourselves, in our habits, and in our mode of living; just as though God, whether about to grant, or to withhold, what we ask of Him, should have regard to us; or, as though it were not greater imperfection in us to doubt, by making these examinations, than all the other imperfections that we can possibly have.*

*The Christian when he shall desire to obtain something from God, let him first look to it whether he has the promise of God whereon to found faith in his prayer; and afterwards let him beware of looking to himself in any way, and let him look to God only and to God's promise, and then, believing, he will obtain all that he shall ask. And as to the promises of God, I remit myself to what I have said in a reply. And like this fig-tree, which only bore leaves but no fruit, are they, who only bear the name of Christians, who observe ceremonies and outward works, but are without the fruit of the Christian name, which is imitation of Christ, the humility, meekness, purity, charity, and obedience of Christ; and are without the fruit of Christian ceremonies and works, which is mortification and vivification; to them who are such, that will happen which betided the fig-tree.*

XXI. 23-27.—And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things?

and who gave thee this authority ? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it ? from heaven, or of men ? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven ; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him ? But if we shall say, Of men ; we fear the people : for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

I do not understand that these persons asked Christ by what authority He did what He did, such as His entrance into the city with the pomp with which He entered it the day before ; His entrance into the temple with the severity with which He entered it the day before ; doing what He did and saying what He said, because they doubted whether He did it by divine authority, for of this they were certain, although it vexed them that it should be so ; they endeavoured to persuade themselves that it was not so ; as it happens to saints of the world, who, although they are certain of the sanctity of the saints of God, because it grieves them that they are saints, try and persuade themselves that they are not so. But I do understand that they asked Him with two purposes ; *one* to show the people that they, who ranked the highest in the world in religion and in sanctity, had not resolved to uphold Christ's credit, in order that the people too should not come to that resolution ; the *other*, to come to words with Christ, in order to get an opportunity to catch Him up in something He might say, or at least to discredit Him with the people, with whom He stood in high consideration.

I understand that Christ knew these their purposes, and He so answered them that they could not succeed in either the one or the other, not choosing to answer them on the subject propounded, reasoning with them as to their rejection of John the Baptist and his baptism; upon their promised observance of the law, and upon their failure in doing so; He shows this by the parable of the two sons, which He then submits. They are like the chief priests and elders of the people, who, (when they see that those who are members of Christ prostrate their false doctrines and expose their hypocrisies by the sincerity of their doctrine and by the purity of their lives,) strive to bring it about that they be discredited by the masses, and plot how to catch them in their words in order to ruin them.

When Christ asked these persons whether St. John's baptism was from heaven, or of men, He meant was it divine or human, was it an ordinance of God, or an imagination of St. John's brain. The evangelist, in saying they reasoned among themselves, means, that desiring to answer Christ, because they wished that He should answer them, they held these arguments amongst themselves. Truly it is something divine, that when these persons came to put this question to Christ, they being the most eminent in sanctity and in authority amongst the Jews, whilst Christ was held to be a low and common fellow, that He should have such authority over them, that refusing to answer their question unless they first answered His, He should succeed in doing so; which I do not so much attribute to the credit that Christ had attained over the people, as I do to the majesty and gravity which He maintained in that His lowness, which manifested forth itself without His obvious presentment of it. And I understand that there are traces of it in every one of those who have the Spirit of Christ, more or less, accordingly as they are more or less like Christ. I have written a Consideration upon this subject [number lxxxii.]

XXI. 28-32.—But what think ye ? A certain man had two sons ; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not : but afterwards he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father ? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not : but the publicans and the harlots believed him : and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

Christ, having stopped the mouths of the high priests and elders, who had come to call Him to account for what He had done and said in the temple, and being desirous of showing them that all their sanctity consisted in words, propounded a parable to them, saying, “*A certain man had two sons*,” &c., meaning, that the man was God ; and that the work in the vineyard was to live conformably to the law of God, and (that to do so) is to live conformably to the will of God ; and that the son, who, being sent into the vineyard, said, that he would not go, but who afterwards, recognising that he had done wrong, went ; such as he were and are men of the world, who, in order to satisfy their affections and lusts, say, that they will not subject themselves either to the law of God or to the will of God ; but afterwards, recognising that they have done wrong, subject themselves to it ; and that the son, who, being sent to the vineyard, said that he would go ; but never went ; such as he were and are the saints of the

world, who, taking sanctity for their point of honour, say, that they will submit themselves to the law of God and to the will of God, whilst they do the very opposite of what God wills, being ambitious, murmurers, envious, malignant, and diabolic ; such were the priests and elders with whom Christ conversed ; and such are all they, who affecting sanctity, persecute Christ ; who will be excluded from the kingdom of God, whilst publicans and harlots are admitted to it ; because they will humble themselves and will accept the righteousness of Christ. So that, as I have several times stated, Christ, in saying, "*Shall go in before you*" does not mean, are more pre-eminent than you, but they are admitted, whilst you are excluded. Christ, when He subjoins, "*For John came unto you*," &c., means, this which I say, I understand thus, considering that you never brought yourselves to believe in John, whilst the publicans and harlots did believe in him, accepting his preaching and his baptism ; and I understand the acceptance consisted in that they believed that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and they knew themselves to be disqualified for it, and they were baptized as a token of their knowledge, penitence, and repentance. The second son, in saying, "*I go, sir*," seems to respond to what the first had said : "*I will not* ;" as though he should say, "*I, yes, I will*." When he says, "*In the way of righteousness*," or, "*by the path of righteousness*," He means, preaching, repentance, or penitence ; which is the way to (attain) the righteousness of the gospel, for they, who do not repent, do not accept the indulgence of the gospel, for it does not appear to them that it concerns them.

XXI. 33-XXII. 1.—Hear another parable : There was a certain householder, who planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country : And

when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen who shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto him, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.

Christ's intention in this parable, as appears from those words, *Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God,*" &c., clearly appears to have been to prophesy the ruin of the Jewish synagogue; which was governed by the high priests, the presbyters, the Pharisees and the scribes; and the succession of the Christian Church, which is governed by *apostles, evangelists, and teachers, not of acquired learning, but of inspired teaching.* And thus I understand that the householder is God; that the vineyard is the people of God; the hedge, the winepress, and the tower, are the Scriptures of the law and of the prophets; and that the husbandmen are the high priests, the presbyters, &c.; whilst the fruits of the vineyard are the love of God and of one's neighbour, and divine worship; that the Lord's servants, whom the husbandmen slew, were the prophets and righteous men, whom God sent to the synagogue, all of whom the rulers of the synagogue persecuted, or caused to be put to death, as Christ will tell us in chapter xxiii.; and that the Lord's son is Christ, whom they themselves slew. As to whether they knew Him or not, *I remit myself to what I shall say upon St. Mark's gospel.* Christ means that God's vineyard, the people of God, was about to be taken from these rulers of the Jewish synagogue, and given to the rulers of the Christian Church.

Where I understand that these rulers then give to God the fruit of His vineyard, when preaching the Gospel, teaching Christian living, and supplying the necessities of Christians, they can say with St. Paul, in Romans i. 9, that "they serve God in the spirit in the gospel of His Son," and that they have profited greatly in that same gospel. That, "*They will reverence my son,*" though it harmonises with the householder, the Lord of the vineyard, it does not harmonise with God, but I have already stated, that in parables, we are but to look to the accomplishment of the purpose designed (by the parable).

Where Christ says, "*Have ye never read,*" &c., it is His

aim to enable them to comprehend the parable; that the Son, whom the bad husbandmen were about to kill, God was about to put in the most eminent place in His kingdom, making Him King and head in the kingdom, fulfilling truly in Him what was spoken of David, in Psalm cxviii. 22 and 23, for that just as David, having been rejected by the rulers of the kingdom, was at last settled as ruler in the kingdom, being made king; so Christ, crucified and put to death by those, who were at that time the rulers over the people of God, is placed as head in the kingdom of God, and is made King.

As to the rest I remit myself to what I have stated in the exposition of the Psalm, appending this: that I do not understand it to have occurred in the construction of the temple, as do some, that a stone which had been rejected was afterwards carved and placed aloft in the temple, but, that it is a figurative speech, not unusual in Holy Scripture.

In saying, "*The Lord hath done this,*" He means, this thing is of the Lord's doing, that the stone rejected is placed aloft, and that we hold it to be an admirable thing, a thing at which we may reasonably marvel. In saying, "*And he that shall fall upon this stone,*" &c., He means, that at one time the man is offended at Christ, at another Christ is offended at the man, so that in one way or the other such a man will perish; a mode of speaking commonly used by us, who say, if the stone strike the jug, it is a bad job for the jug, and if the jug strike the stone, it is a bad job for the jug; that they always get smashed, who come to Christ impelled by their own caprice or by human motives, not having been called by God; they all perish, either through their being scandalised at Christ's humiliation and lowness, or through Christ's being offended at their pride and arrogance.

Where it is to be understood that Christ is called "stone," as well because that all, who come to Him

without the Holy Spirit, stumble and break their heads against Him ; as because that all, who come to Him with the Holy Spirit, are safe, firm and steady in Him, like an edifice erected upon living stone. It would seem that Simeon understood this, when he said (in Luke ii. 34), "Behold this is He, who is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel."

The evangelist adding, that when the chief priests and elders perceived that Christ spoke what He said against them, they would have laid hands on Him had they dared, well shows us what fruit the word of God produces in saints of the world. Where I understand that had these been men of the world, they, knowing that Christ had spoken concerning them, would have been confused and ashamed, and possibly they might have amended ; but, as they professed to be saints, they deliberated how they should take Christ and put Him to death, seeing that He went about discovering their misdeeds, malpractices, and delinquencies. Now, they, who make a profession of personal sanctity, as did these rulers of the synagogue, always hold such deliberations against them who are members of Christ.

## CHAPTER XXII.

XXII. 2-14. — The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, who made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden, to the wedding: and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them who are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise. And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers and burned up their city. Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they who were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all, as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man who had not on a wedding garment. And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither,

not having a wedding garment ? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen.

It is well to notice the mode of comparison employed by Christ in all these parables, saying that the kingdom of heaven is compared, or is like, to the Lord of the Vineyard, or to the King, whilst He means, that that will come to pass in the kingdom of the heavens which occurred to the Lord of the Vineyard or to the King.

Christ has two aims in this parable : *one* is the same as that of the preceding parable, as to the Hebrew synagogue being rejected, in order that the Christian Church should take its place ; whilst the *other* is the same that we have seen in other parables, as to their being cast out of the kingdom of God, of the Christian Church, who enter it without Christian faith, and who are in it, without Christian characteristics, coming of themselves, without having been called by God.

The king is God. The dinner is eternal life, of which they take possession in the present life, who having been called to it, leave everything else and obey the call. The viands for the table, the bulls and the capons already killed for the feast, typify as I understand the glory and happiness prepared for those, who accept the grace of the gospel ; for just as those things are the substance of the human and temporal feast, so these things are the substance of the divine and eternal feast.

They, who were invited to the dinner or wedding, under the law, were they, who were subject to the law, at which time, the servants, who called, were the prophets and just men ; whilst under the gospel the guests invited are men generally, for the indulgence and pardon published in the gospel is general, at which time the servants, who call, are

the apostles, they who have the gift of the apostolate, and what they say is laid down by Paul (2 Cor. v. 20, 21), "*We beseech you in Christ's name, be ye reconciled to God. For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God, through Him.*"

They, who, being under the law, were called, who would not come, but went the one to his farm and the other to his merchandise, are they who made light of God's call, because they were absorbed in the things of the present life; they did not at once resolve to leave everything to obey God; and they who laid hands upon the king's servants are the saints of the world, who, under the law, caused the prophets and the just men to be put to death, because they called them to the kingdom of God; they held themselves to be saints, and they were held to be such, and therefore they could not endure that any other holiness, than that which they had, should be intimated to them. The armies with which the king destroyed his guests, burning their city, were, we can say, those of Titus and Vespasian, who massacred the Jews and burnt Jerusalem.

They, who being under the gospel were called, who would not come, being unwilling to accept the grace of the gospel, are the men of the world, who despise Christ's purity, meekness, and humility. Whilst they, who make profession of external sanctity, who say that they believe in Christ, whilst they deny the grace of the gospel, the benefit of Christ, are typified in the man who entered the marriage-feast without a wedding-garment; and such practically typify all those, who enter the Christian Church with human prudence, and as mercenaries with human designs; coming clad in works, without faith, and destitute of faith and of works of faith; and coming thus clad with the law, and destitute of the gospel, clad with Moses, and destitute of Christ, with whom all must be clad, who have to sit down to participate in God's feast in the life eternal, because this is the wedding-garment, and there-

fore Paul says in Romans xiii. 14, "*Put ye on the Lord Jesus.*" Now we put on Christ when, striving to comprehend the perfection in which we are comprehended, we imitate the divine perfections which we see in Christ; and we then show that we have put on Christ when Christian characteristics are seen in us.

And because Christ concluded this parable by saying, "*For many are called, whilst but few are chosen,*" we are constrained to say, that all those who have but the outward call, who accept the gospel from human motives after their own fashion, are comprehended in that one person who was turned out of the feast; and that we are to understand that the number of the called and not chosen is greater than that of those who are chosen; and that we may rest assured that the parables do not harmonise in everything, for had this one harmonised in everything, we should have been compelled to say, that the chosen are beyond all comparison more numerous than the called, since the parable speaks but of one who was turned out of the wedding feast, of the many who were assembled at it.

In this parable I consider four classes of men. *The first* are they, who loving this life more than the life eternal, and being called to the life eternal, have not the courage to lose this in order to gain the other; these manifest their unbelief.

*The second* are they, who holding themselves to be, and being held by the world to be, saints, if they are called to be saints of God, they become indignant against those who call them, and they lay hands upon them and kill them: these manifest with their unbelief, their malice and their malignity; and here I understand in what great danger are they, who are saints of the world.

*The third* are they, who desire humanly and naturally to attain eternal life; and being called to it by an outward call, without waiting for the inward one, they go, without knowing either how or where; clothing themselves with

garments made by the hands of man, not knowing that garment wrought by the hands of God, which is Jesus Christ our Lord; these manifest their ignorance and blindness, and these are almost like the second, and are in danger of doing the same as they did in this life; whilst in the other life, their end will be the same, since they will be cast into outer darkness, which has been described in chapter xiii. 50.

*The fourth* are they who, by God's grace, know themselves to be ungodly and inwardly hostile to God, whilst they feel a nascent desire to be just and friends with God; and, the gospel being presented to them, which offers them, both one and the other, freely and graciously, and being inwardly moved to accept it, with a call both inward and outward, they know themselves to be just and friends of God, not of themselves, but through Christ; and, knowing themselves to be so, they enter into possession of the kingdom of heaven, divesting and stripping themselves of everything that could rob them of possession, such as the pleasures, satisfactions, honours, and dignities of the present life, to all which they cease to be attached, and of the like are external justifications, which become odious to them, lest they should be brought by them to be saints of the world; now clothing themselves and dressing themselves in every garb that can maintain them in possession, as for instance, mortification and vivification, associated with which are ever those Christian characteristics which Christ manifested in His life; these show that they are the elect of God, that they are the children of God, and that they are ruled and governed by the spirit of God; and thus they only are admitted to the feast of the great king, who is the father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

That which is here rendered "*capons*," is in the Greek "fatted poultry;" and that which is here rendered "*killed*," is in the Greek "*killed in sacrifice*." In saying "*the highways*," He means the cross-ways, where certain roads traverse other roads, because there men would be met with

more readily. When He says "*reclining or seated*," He means the men seated at table; but the bad did not eat, only the good did so; now the bad are they, who, being without Christian faith, are destitute of works of faith, who are without Christian characteristics; whilst on the contrary, the good are they, who have faith, and works done in faith, their goodness consisting in faith, of which their works of faith bear testimony.

XXII. 15-22. — Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Cæsar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's. When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

In the same manner that these Pharisees, saints of the world, convicted by Christ's words, consulted against Him, how they should ensnare Him in His words, to cause Him to say something whence they might find occasion to lay hands on Him, and kill Him; so all they, who are saints of the world, finding themselves convicted by the words of the saints of God, consult against them, to make them say

something, whereupon they may lay hands upon them, and kill them. Whence therefore it concerns the saints of God, either not to argue with saints of the world, or should they do so, to be upon their guard to say nothing, which may expose them to calumny.

All this Pharisaic malice is saturated with artifice. The *first* consists in that the Pharisees, desiring to ask Christ as to the tribute or census which the Jews paid to the Roman Emperor, for to the Jews it appeared to be an extravagant thing that the people of God should be tributary to a godless man, they sent men to Him, who were of opinion that it ought not to be paid, in order that Christ should express Himself the more freely, that it was not lawful to pay it, and that they thus should accomplish their purpose, of accusing Him, that He forbade that tribute should be paid to the Emperor; of which they falsely did accuse Him after that they had laid hands upon Him. I differ in opinion from those, who say that these Herodians collected the tribute, or that they held that it ought to be paid, for it would not have answered their purpose to have sent these persons, for what they desired was that He should say that it was not lawful to pay the tribute, as appears from what they said to Him.

The *second* artifice consists in that, before they put questions, they address Him in terms calculated to lead Him to speak against the Emperor, terms peculiar to the Pharisees, and in which we may consider three qualifications that ought to concur in a Christian preacher: *first*, that he be true; *second*, that his doctrine be truly Christian, conformable to the will of God; and *third*, that he disregard men of the world, never ceasing to preach the gospel, nor to teach Christian living; nay, these three qualifications always concur in those, who have the gift of the apostolate, and by them, we can judge whether he, who preaches to us, is an apostle of Christ or of men.

These same qualifications concur in those, who by divine inspiration accept the gospel, which acceptance makes

them true inwardly, whilst it teaches them the truth, in order that they may be able to teach others, and so makes them that having come to be resolved as to the world, they only respect the gospel, Christ and God. And these three qualifications may serve us as countersigns, by which we may be able to know what effect the acceptance of the gospel has wrought in us. Christ, in saying, "*Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?*" shows that the malignity and crafty wickedness, with which they came to ensnare Him in His words, annoyed Him.

When He asked them, "*Whose image is this?*" &c., Christ did not pretend not to know, for He already knew it, but to take occasion from what they replied, to tell them what He said to them, "*Render then to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's,*" &c., meaning, that it imports little that we render to men what they require of us, so that we render to God what He requires of us; as though He had said, Give the Emperor what he claims as due from you, what he requires of you; and render to God, what He claims to be due from you, what He requires of you. The Emperor claims tribute, as census or poll-tax, give him it; whilst God claims faith and love, give Him them. In saying "*tribute money,*" He means the money with which the tribute is paid. Paul speaks upon this payment of tribute in Romans xiii. 7, and I remit myself to what I have stated upon that passage.

XXII. 23-33.—The same day came to him the Sadducees, who say that there is no resurrection, and asked him, Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.

And last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife shall she be of the seven ? for they all had her. Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob ? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine.

From what we read in these words, and in those of Acts xxiii., it appears that, amongst the Jews, the resurrection of the body was not believed in as an article of faith, but merely as one of opinion ; the Pharisees affirmed it, whilst the Sadducees denied it. These latter, seeking to convince Christ, in order that He, like them, should deny it, proceed to put a question to Him, which, although to their mind perfectly adequate to test His views, is, to the mind of any one, who shall not be an ardent partisan in his desire to defend that opinion, most futile.

Whence I understand every one ought to be on his guard against the adoption of any opinion ; for it almost always proves so, that, after having adopted it, he is obliged to defend it ; and, wishing to defend it, precisely that happens, which happened to these Sadducees, who, denying the resurrection of the body, defended their opinion with arguments similar to those laid down here. Nay, this must have been that, which they held to be most effective ; they imagined, that in the life eternal, these bodies of ours raised up, impassible and immortal, will be

so with all the incidents that betide these bodies whilst they are passible and mortal.

This marriage law, which they here quote, is in Deuteronomy xxv. 5, and it appears that God designed by that law to permanently sustain those Jewish families who had divided the promised land between them, in order that the benefit received might remain the more impressed upon their memories. In saying "*raise up*," or resuscitate, "*seed unto his brother*," it means, that he should beget children by his deceased brother's wife, of whom the first should be called the deceased brother's child and not his, who begot him. "*Not having seed*," is equivalent to, leaving no children.

From Christ's reply, which says, "*Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures*," it is to be understood that all men's errors, upon supernatural subjects, proceed from two sources; *one* of which is misunderstanding of the Holy Scriptures; because, had they understood them, they would not have erred, for it is most certain that they teach him, who understands them, all truth; whilst *the other* is the not understanding the power of God, for had men known that God can do all that He pleases; when something should be propounded to them, whereby the glory of God is illustrated, they would not doubt respecting it, for they would consider: by this thing the glory of God is illustrated, God is most omnipotent, whence it well follows that this thing is true; and in the same manner when something other should be propounded to them, whereby the glory of God is lessened, they would in no wise admit it, for they would consider: by this thing the glory of God is lessened, God is most omnipotent, whence it follows that this thing is not true, since it derogates from the glory of God. So that it is sound advice to any man, first, to take up no opinion, and afterwards to ask God to open his eyes, so that he may know His omnipotence, and that he may understand the Holy Scriptures, so that he may never err in anything.

It may well be inferred from these, Christ's words, that he, who shall understand the Holy Scriptures, and shall know the omnipotence of God, will believe in the resurrection of the dead, in which Christ affirms there will be no marriages, for, although there will be bodies of flesh, they will be as immaculate as the angels in heaven.

And Christ, desirous of showing the Sadducees one of those passages of the Holy Scriptures, whence one might understand the resurrection of the dead, quotes that in Exodus iii. 15, where God says, "*I am the God of Abraham,*" &c., and, when Christ adds, "*He is not the God of the dead,*" &c., it seems that Christ understood that, had not God, in His divine mind, held Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to have been resuscitated, He would not call Himself their God; for He, being the living God, would not call Himself the God of the dead; so that we are not to understand that, when God says, "*I am the God of Abraham,*" &c., that He means, I am the God whom Abraham adored and served, &c., but I am the God whom Abraham adores and serves, and will adore and will serve; for, although his body is in the tomb, yet his soul is alive, and, at its appointed time, it will return and be united with his body. It was with reason that the multitude were astonished at this doctrine of Christ, for there is no doubt but that no man would ever have extracted this sense from those words.

XXII. 34-40.—But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. Then one of them, who was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is

the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

The Pharisees, gratified that Christ had so answered the Sadducees that they could not answer Him, went to Him, with the intention of gaining from Him the honour, which the Sadducees, their opponents, had lost; and thus they caused one of their party, who was learned in Moses' law, to test Christ's knowledge, and that the lawyer should ask Him which commandment was the most important in the law.

And from Christ's reply, we learn that the main thing that God desires of man is love, desiring that this love be without the slightest taint of personal interest, that it be most pure, most perfect; and then it is so, when man sets all his love and all his affection upon God, having nothing in his heart, in his soul, or in his mind, but God only; delighting himself in Him only, and keeping Him constantly impressed upon His memory, never allowing it to wander from Him. This is what God desires of every man; for this God caresses them, blesses them, with gifts, benefits, and favours.

And thus it is, that God, desiring to be loved by man, and knowing that the greatest impediment he has to love Him is the knowledge that he has offended Him, because, as is commonly said, "*he that offends does not pardon*," God has laid all the sins of all men upon His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord; and He has chastised them all in Him, giving a general pardon to all men, in order that the impediment to love being removed, they may apply themselves to love Him, as He desires to be beloved of them.

And upon this I have written a consideration to which I remit myself, here stating this, that so long as a man shall not know himself to be pardoned by God in Christ,

it will be impossible for him to love God, in the mode He desires to be loved, for Himself, without any other motive whatever; nay, effectively, he shall not know what love to God is. Whence it is to be understood that man then loves God as He desires to be loved "*with all the heart, with all the soul,*" when he loves God, without any interest, solely because He deserves to be loved.

And men cannot love God thus, whilst unregenerated by the Holy Spirit, because, man's first love is naturally for himself; hence he comes to love God selfishly, and does God manifest wrong; who insists upon being loved first, and wills that man love himself, and that he love other men and God's other creatures, from love to God, more or less, according as they illustrate, more or less, the glory of God; an intention only held by those, who love God, not for themselves, but for the perfections which they recognise in God.

Men, who do not know themselves to be pardoned by God, reconciled to God, and friends of God, through Christ, although they may bring themselves to love God, and to act conformably with what they know to be the will of God, would neither love nor act from love to God, but from love to themselves, in order to be pardoned by God, reconciled with God, and made friends of God; and they will never in this way come to attain what they desire, for the true way is to accept the grace of the Gospel, and afterwards to love, serve and act, because God deserves to be loved, to be served and to be obeyed, without man's having any other motive whatever.

So that there are four reasons why it is impossible for man to love God as He requires to be loved, if he do not hold himself to be reconciled to God, and to be a friend of God, through Christ: *First*, that "*he who offends never pardons,*" and not pardoning, cannot love. *Second*, that unregenerate man retaining alive his natural inclination, it is impossible for him not to love himself first. *Third*, that not holding himself to be righteous through Christ,

he loves himself, and will love in order to be righteous. *Fourth*, that not knowing Christ, he will not know God, and, not knowing Him, he will not love Him, as He requires to be loved, “*with all the heart*,” &c.

We all have to labour to attain this posture, and forasmuch as he, who has not begun to move towards it, is farthest from it, it concerns every one, who has accepted the grace of the gospel, to persuade himself that he must attain it, and that God is able to make him attain it; and with this persuasion begin to move towards it; praying to God to send him His Holy Spirit to be his guide in this generous enterprise.

And let no man, unless he begin experimentally, think himself qualified by knowledge, to comprehend this divine love; for his comprehension will be exactly correlative to his experience. And let every one moreover know, that he will never come to love his neighbour as himself, unless he first love God supremely; that love, beginning, as has been stated, by faith and by knowledge.

And here I will say this: that when I stated in a Consideration [lxx.] that faith and hope are sustained by love, and that love is self-sustaining, I meant, that if man does not love God, he will not be steady in trusting Him, neither will he hope for the fulfilment of God’s promises; whilst that in loving God, because man loves Him for Himself, knowing that He deserves to be loved, man does not need to be sustained in the love, nor in the faith of what he believes that God has done for him, nor in the expectation of what he hopes that God will do with him, because he loves without personal interest; of which love man is incapable whilst he is man, for he knows not how to love without interest and without aim, because he loves himself in everything and beyond everything.

When Christ adds, “*Upon these two commandments*,” &c., He means that the man, who fulfils these two commandments of the love of God, and of one’s neighbour, fulfils all that the law and the prophets command; for it and

they have no other intention than to bring man to love God and to love his neighbour; now he that shall love God, will not deviate from the will of God, nay he will apply himself to everything that he shall know to be the will of God, denying and renouncing his own will; and he that shall love his neighbour will do nothing that can prejudice him, nay he will apply himself to do him all the good he can, even to deprive himself of his own comforts and gratifications, in order to accommodate and gratify his neighbour, as we see that Christ did, and as we see that Paul, His apostle, did.

It is assuredly worthy of consideration that this commandment affecting love should not be found in what is called the decalogue, but in Deuteronomy, the second law. Possibly God retained it for the second law, as being more perfect and more pure, designing that the people instructed and exercised in the commandments of the first law, should be better qualified to understand this, but this is a speculation of mine.

According to the Hebrew text this commandment runs thus (Deuteronomy vi. 4), *Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might!*" As though Moses had said: Since God is one, love only Him, giving Him all your love. Where it says, "*with all thy might*," in Hebrew idiom it says, with thine every faculty; and I understand that this is said by way of enhancement, and that there is no difference between the one and the other.

XXII. 41-46. — While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him, Lord,

saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool ? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son ? And no man was able to answer him a word ; neither durst any man, from that day forth, ask him any more questions.

To comprehend these words two things must be considered. *One*, that Christ was not disparaged in being called the Son of David, since it is evident that He was so called, by them, who desired to honour Him, and that St. Matthew commences his gospel by calling Him so, and that St. Paul says (Rom. i. 3), that He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh. And *the other* that, that passage (Psalm ex. 1), “*The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on my right hand,*” &c., was commonly understood amongst the Jews as relating to the Messiah, to Christ ; which even the Jews, who have lived since Christ, understand in the same sense, though they do not admit that it refers to our Christ, because they do not recognise Him as the Messiah.

These two things considered, we understand that Christ designed by these words to convince the Pharisees that they ought to have held a higher opinion of the Messiah than they did hold. They only held Him to be a Son of David, and therefore a mere man, whilst Christ designs to show them, that David held Him to be more than a son, and therefore to be more than a mere man ; since, speaking by the Spirit, he calls Him Lord, and he would not have called Him Lord, had he not recognised Him to be more than son ; David indeed knew Him to be a son by human generation (birth), whilst he recognised Him to be the Son of God, by divine generation, and therefore he called Him Lord.

- I understand this to be the right apprehension of these words. And if any one shall say that the Pharisees might

well have answered Christ, by saying, that David calls the Messiah Lord, although He is his son, just as he worshipped Solomon (1 Kings i.), when he was elected king, although he was his son; I shall in reply say that they could not; for what David did with Solomon, was not by the Spirit, as when he called the Messiah Lord, but by the flesh; it was an external ceremony appropriate to temporal rule.

And if another shall say to me that the Pharisees might well have answered Christ, by saying, that those words of David do not affect the Messiah, nay, that it appears that they are words spoken to David in the name of the Jewish nation, as I have shown in my exposition of the Psalms, I shall reply to him and say, that they could not; for we have stated that those words were commonly understood of the Messiah before the time of Christ, of which apprehension it appears to have been Christ's design to avail Himself (in argument).

And therefore well does the evangelist say that no one could answer Him a word, for they knew nothing of the divine mystery of the divine generation of the Messiah. And when it is added, "*Neither durst any man from that day forth*," &c., the evangelist shows that all the questions which they addressed to Christ were armed with malice, for they ceased to question, when they knew that His answers were divine. *Had they questioned with sincerity, the desire to ask would have increased, being delighted with the answers He gave them; but, as they questioned but to calumniate, they would not ask, seeing that their aim failed.*

## CHAPTER XXIII.

XXIII. 1-12.—Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments; and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you, shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

There are three things involved in these words well worthy of being considered. *First*, that what we stated

upon chapter v. is truth; to wit, that Christ said many things that only concerned the time in which He spoke them, and for those who heard them, for so it is that the scribes and Pharisees sitting in Moses' seat is equivalent to their teaching the observance of Moses' law; it is also a fact, that he who shall assert that these, Christ's words, concern all times, will be constrained to confess that the whole law has to be observed concurrently with the gospel, which has been condemned from the time of the apostles; so that this, Christ's admonition, only concerned that period whilst He lived amongst men, during which time, and until the coming of the Holy Spirit, it was the will of God that His people should be subject to the law; from which subjection it was freed when the Holy Spirit came, who succeeded to the rule and government of the people of God, instead of the law.

And thus began to be fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah (chapter xxxi. 31-33), which I understand they all feel inwardly to have commenced fulfilment, who, accepting the gospel, receive the Holy Spirit; and I understand that we shall see the entire and perfect fulfilment in the life eternal, where we all, small and great, shall know God, and in Him shall know everything, and thus will have no necessity of being taught.

They, who have not yet accepted the gospel, who have not yet received the Holy Spirit, are, as St. Paul says, still under the schoolmaster, under the law, the prophecy of Jeremiah not having yet begun to be fulfilled in them. And such as these are they, who, although they bear the Christian name and read the gospel, go about seeking *quid licet*, "what is permitted," whilst, had they been Christians indeed, who had accepted the gospel, they would have ceased to go about seeking the *quid licet*, "the what is permitted," and they would have occupied themselves in seeking out, *quid expedit*, "what is expedient," as I have written in a Consideration [xc.]; besides which, see what is said upon chapter xvii. 24, &c.

Christ, desiring to explain the reason why He willed that His disciples should not act as the Scribes and Pharisees did, says, "*For they talk and do not*," meaning, for they do not observe that which they teach others to observe; and proceeding further with this explanation He says, "*For they bind heavy burdens*," &c., meaning, that they burdened the people with strange and intolerable observances, taking care not to bear them themselves, not even so much as to move them with a finger.

It may be gathered from these words of Christ, that although the life of the Scribes and Pharisees was bad, for their minds were bad, their doctrine was not so bad as to render it injurious, at that time, to follow it. Whereupon, I, considering how much more injurious is the doctrine of our Scribes and Pharisees, understand that ours are even more pernicious than theirs. And as to the reason, I remit myself to what I have stated in a reply.

And if it shall appear to any one that this is contrary to what Christ stated in chapter xvi., cautioning His disciples that they should beware of the doctrine of the Scribes and Sadducees, I will tell him, that, as I understand it, Christ here spoke of the doctrine which consisted in doing that which pertained to the fulfilment of the law and of human constitutions; whilst there He spoke of the doctrine, which consists in believing, in accepting Christ as the Messiah promised in the law, which acceptance was impeded by the doctrine of those, who, in their dreamy imaginations, conceived a profane and worldly Messiah, and wrested the Holy Scriptures to make them speak of what they had dreamt.

From that passage, "*But all their works they do*," &c., we glean another thing worthy of consideration, for Christ, in laying down the characteristics of those Scribes and Pharisees, opens our eyes to recognise all those to be Scribes and Pharisees in whom we shall see these features.

*First*, delighting that their works, which they hold to be good, and which the vulgar persuaded by them hold to

be good, be seen of men, in order that they may be prized by them and esteemed by them.

*Second*, the manifestation of sanctity by external indications, as by the Pharisees and Scribes with their phylacteries, which bore certain sentences from the Bible, or from the commandments in the decalogue, written on them; and with their borders or fringes, which they attached to four parts of their vestments, to indicate austerity of life.

*Third*, the being ambitious, seeking to occupy the seat of honour in all the public places they visited, such as were the feasts held at that time, and in the synagogues.

*Fourth*, the being proud and hollow, seeking to be saluted and reverenced in public, and to be called masters, as did the Scribes and Pharisees, who insisted on being called "Rabbi," which signifies master, but, being derived from a word that signifies much, means master of many sciences.

From that, "*But be not ye called*," &c., we glean another thing, worthy of consideration, enabling us to understand some things affecting the duty of the Christian. *First*, that the Christian is in no way to pride himself upon being called by a name that signifies greatness or authority, as was that of rabbi, and as is now that of master.

*Second*, that he recognise no one as Master, but Christ; whilst they recognise Christ as Master, who, having the Spirit of Christ, begin inwardly to feel the fulfilment of the prophecy of Jeremiah within themselves. These, although they call some masters, call them so but with their mouths to humour them and in deference to usage, but not with their hearts; knowing, that they know and understand of spiritual and divine things, just so much as they inwardly feel and experience; which feeling and which experience they have, being taught, never ceasing, however, to esteem those, who, having the gift of the apostolate and teaching, externally lead and guide them to inward

feeling, and to experience; but these do not pride themselves upon being called masters, neither are they called masters by them, who know them. And it is not contradictory to this, that St. Paul should call himself a teacher of the heathen or of the Gentiles; it being a fact that he called himself a teacher, because having the gift of teaching, with the gift of the apostolate, he taught the Gentiles how to live like Christians.

The *third* thing of the Christian's duty is that he hold as brethren, all those, who have the Spirit of Christ, seeking to be held as a brother by every one of them; and there is equality in the brotherhood, with but little difference between an elder brother and a younger brother.

The *fourth* that he has to recognise no one for father, save God; whilst they recognise God for father, who, being regenerated by the Holy Spirit, the Christian spirit, recognise themselves as renewed in their habits; beginning to leave and to abhor profane habits, and beginning to assume and to love Christian habits. These recognise God as father, because they recognise themselves to be the children of God, ruled and governed by the Spirit of God, and, although they call some fathers, they call them so, but with the mouth to humour them, and in deference to usage; but not with their hearts, not because they recognise their status as that assigned them by the Spirit, since they recognise that only by God through Christ.

And what St. Paul says is not contrary to this, where he showed that they were his children, whom God brought, by his preaching, unto obedience to the faith, to acceptance of the gospel; for his design was not the ambitious one, of seeking to be esteemed and respected as father, for he only sought to be believed in that which concerns the doctrine of Christian life; and is a fashion of speech as though he should say: since I have brought you to the gospel, follow the doctrine of Christian life which I teach you, and do not depart from it.

The fifth thing, as to the Christian's duty, that is to be understood here, is, that Christian superiority consists in serving those who are Christians; so that that Christian is greatest amongst Christians who serves most, not only in inward and spiritual things, but also in outward and corporal, humbling himself to any office, however low, in the service of any Christian, recognising Christ in him, by the Spirit of Christ.

And Christ concluding these, His admonitions, by saying, "*And whosoever shall exalt himself;*" &c., shows that His design, throughout them all, has been to exhort us to humility, that we should despise and abase ourselves, doing the very opposite of what the Scribes and Pharisees did; so that we should show by humility what difference there is between saints of the world and saints of God; and Christ means, that God will humble and abase to the earth him, who shall exalt himself as did the Pharisees; and that He will exalt the man, who, following His example, shall humble himself and prostrate himself, despising and annihilating himself; and who shall rejoice, in being despised and annihilated of men, until he lose that vain arrogance, which by natural depravity attaches to all men; to effect which the most proper medicine is to consider the humility of Christ, "*who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation,*" &c. (Phil. ii. 6, 7).

XXIII. 13-33. But woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you,

Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte ; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing ; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor. Ye fools and blind ! for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold ? And, whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing ; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. Ye fools and blind : for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift ? Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by Him that sitteth thereon. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ! for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith : these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides ! who strain off a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee ! cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypo-

rites ! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them who killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers ! how can ye escape the damnation of hell ?

Two things are worthy of consideration in these words. *First*, that Christ, being meekness itself, benignity and mercy to all people, even as we have seen Him in what went before, was rough, rigorous, and severe against the Scribes and Pharisees, because they arrogated the highest sanctity, and did their utmost to be held holy, whilst they were impious, iniquitous, and perverse. Whence we may learn, that to God there is nothing more abhorrent than is the hypocrisy, the external sanctity of those, who hold themselves, and who joy to be held, saints by the world, masking their wickedness and publishing their acts of false goodness. And let us learn, moreover, that, to the glory of God, we must ever oppose these, when we see that they are prejudicial to the people of God, to the church of God, and to God's elect; discovering their hypocrisies and their baseness, in order to discredit their false doctrines; looking to it, however, that we do not act passionately; that we do not allow the flesh to feast itself

upon such work; for this would be to depart from Christian duty and decorum.

With this aim do I understand Christ to have said all this against the Scribes and Pharisees; and with the same aim do I understand St. Paul to have called false apostles dogs and evil workers. Where I will add this: that just as I shall not hold it to be bad, for one, imitating Christ and St. Paul, to discover the false doctrine and wickedness of those, who, being saints of the world, make profession of being saints of God, for I shall believe, that he says what he says from zeal for the gospel of Christ and of God, free from human passion; so neither should I hold it bad for another, although he see and know the false doctrine and the wickedness of the saints of the world, if he pass it over and be silent, for I shall believe that he has not the courage to speak, knowing himself to be so weak, that he cannot speak without passion, without mixing up himself in it.

The *second* thing which there is to consider in these words is the eight characteristics which concur in those, who are saints of the world, as were the Scribes and Pharisees.

*The first characteristic* is their being opposed to Christian and spiritual life, interpreting the Holy Scriptures after their own manner, according to their opinions, and not according to that which they designed, who wrote them. I understand this, to be the shutting up of the kingdom of heaven against men, from which it ever follows that such interpreters never enter into the kingdom of heaven, into the Christian and spiritual church, nor do they let those enter, who do enter, without impeding and obstructing their entrance in every possible way and manner: so that in saying, "*Neither suffer ye them that do enter,*" it may be understood, that as far as they are concerned, no one of those would enter who do enter, for they do their utmost not to let them enter.

*The second characteristic* of saints of the world is to

deceive widows and devout persons, but simpletons, eating up their property ; giving them to understand that they make long prayers to God for them. Christ says of such, that they shall receive, or have, the greater damnation, heaping up the wrong they do the widows, upon the wrong they do themselves, being malignant and perverse.

*The third characteristic* of saints of the world is to travel, with great effort, over sea and over land, or, as Spaniards say, “*to collect the winds and drink them*,” in order to make a proselyte to their religion or profession : to make an apparent Christian of a Jew, a Moor, or a Turk, and, afterwards, to make him more diabolic and infernal than themselves ; for that such an one, disillusionised and liberated from his religion, and not assuming the Christian, which is wholly spiritual and inward, remains most impious. And here, I understand, with what circumspection men ought to proceed, when they lead a man from one religion, in order to attract him to another, or from superstitious life to spiritual life.

*The fourth characteristic* of saints of the world is an avarice that is cloaked, such as was that of the Scribes and Pharisees, who made it obligatory to swear by the gold of the temple, and by the gift or offering upon the altar, that he, who swore, should pay the gold, and should give the offering, whilst they did not make it obligatory to swear by the temple or by the altar, because he who swore could not be condemned to pay for temple or altar, since it was not allowed to erect another temple or another altar ; whilst they did not consider what Christ states, that the temple is greater than the gold, and the altar than the gift ; for it is so, that the gold was consecrated by the temple, and the gift was consecrated by standing upon the altar. This concerned those times. By “*consecrated*,” I understand dedicated to God.

It may also be, that by these words, Christ censured the Scribes and Pharisees for their blindness to apprehension of the law ; and thus blindness to apprehension of the

Holy Scriptures would be *the fourth characteristic* of saints of the world. As to oaths, I remit myself to what I have said upon chapter v.

*The fifth characteristic* of saints of the world is, that they are scrupulous upon things of little importance. Christ states, that the Scribes and Pharisees were such, who very diligently paid tithes of pot-herbs, and of vegetables, and of other things similarly unimportant, omitting from their reckoning things that constituted the foundation of the law, as, for instance, judgment, in judging all equally and justly; mercy, in showing commiseration for the wretched, the indigent, and the afflicted; and faith, in trusting God's words, relying upon His promises, and depending in all, and everything, upon God.

In gospel times we discharge these three things, striving to be upright and equitable in judging between our neighbours and brethren, and in being merciful to them, and in believing that God, when He chastised our sins in Christ, pardoned us, and holds us to be righteous, to be risen again, and to be glorified; and it is certainly something worthy of marvel, that, amongst Christians, there is hardly one, who confesses to himself his shortcomings in Christian faith. Christ, by adding, *These indeed, it behoved you to do,*" &c., paralysed the calumnious imputations they might have made against him, by saying, that He inculcated the non-payment of tithes: effectively, we see that Christ designed that they should never be able to say that He was in anything opposed to what the law commanded. To treat things of little importance scrupulously, whilst things of great importance are disregarded, is styled by Christ, "*to strain off the gnat and to swallow the camel.*"

*The sixth characteristic* of saints of the world is to be very superstitious in external and apparent sanctity, and to be very licentious inwardly and actually; acting as do they, who wash the outside of the vase or platter, but leave it filthy inside, where cleanliness is more necessary; because outward impurity does not pollute that which is

drank, or that which is eaten, although it offends the eyes and the hands of the person, who drinks or eats; whilst internal impurity pollutes the one and offends the other. Christ adding, “*Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first,*” &c., teaches us that we ought first to attend to the adjustment and adornment of the inward man, for this cleansed, it is easy to adjust the outward, nay, it adjusts itself; whilst, when the outward is adjusted first, the inward remains more disadjusted, because the man looks at himself outwardly, and, finding himself just and holy, he disregards himself inwardly. The comparison that I instituted (in the *Alfabeto Cristiano*, page 157), between the itch or the scab, would appositely illustrate this.

*The seventh characteristic* of saints of the world, is their being like to tombs and sepulchres, very ornate outwardly and very stinking inwardly; the external ornamentation consists in all those things that have apparent sanctity; whilst the inward stench springs from infidelity, from self-love, from malice, and malignity, which are always associated with them, who are saints of the world.

*The eighth characteristic* of those, who are saints of the world, is to honour, prize, and esteem those, who [deceased] were saints of God, and to dishonour, despise, persecute, and kill those, who are saints of God: and it is so, that, being unable to deny the sanctity of the deceased, evinced by what was seen in them, they honour them, they prize them, and they esteem them, as did the Scribes and Pharisees, the prophets, and other just persons, to whom they erected sepulchres and memorials or monuments; whilst it is also a fact, that, not being able to tolerate the sanctity of the living, because by it, their own which is false and feigned, is condemned, they dishonour, despise, persecute, and kill them; as did the Scribes and Pharisees to Christ, and they have since done to Christians, who are the saints of God.

So that here Christ does not rebuke the Scribes and Pharisees for what they did to the Prophets and just men

whom their Fathers had killed; but because they, persevering in being such as were their fathers, did that which their fathers had done, though they affirmed the contrary; as though Christ had said, of what use is it that you condemn what your fathers did? since you, like them do, and will do, what they have done. And adding, "*You fill up*," &c., Christ means, since you are just like your fathers, you will take off the mask, and do as they have done. And Christ, considering the chastisement which was about to be laid on them, added, "*Ye serpents*," &c., meaning, you will do as did your fathers, and you will be chastised like them, in the fire of hell.

These eight characteristics, which concur in saints of the world, ought well to be considered by the saints of God, in order to preserve them from their doctrines, and from their conversations; now the saints of God are they, who occupy themselves with the eight beatitudes which Christ lays down in chapter v., which are, as it were, the eight characteristics of those, who are the saints of God.

XXIII. 34-39.—Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold,

your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord !

Christ, having defined the eight characteristics that concurred in the Scribes and Pharisees, which concur to the letter in all the saints of the world, forasmuch as they too are Scribes and Pharisees, proceeds terribly to menace the whole Jewish nation impersonated by the Scribes and Pharisees and by Jerusalem, saying, “ *Wherefore, behold, I send unto you,* ” &c. Whence, because it does not appear to me that these words properly harmonise, that Christ should speak these words of Himself, that He sent prophets, &c., although, indeed, He might well have said them of Himself, I remit myself to St. Luke’s gospel (chap. xi. 49), where he says, “ *Wherefore also the Wisdom of God said,* ” &c. The evangelist declares that Christ did not utter these words in His own name, but in the name of the Wisdom of God ; and this affects Christ’s humility, who being able to speak them in His own name, He being the Wisdom of God, because they were unbecoming the position He had assumed, spake them in the name of the Wisdom of God ; I mean to say, that although He spake them of Himself, He desired to attribute them, not to Himself, but to the wisdom of God, which spoke by Him ; in order that, what He said, might be more highly thought of by those who heard Him ; nay, I think that this was a Hebraism, for it is like that at the beginning of the book of Ecclesiastes, where its says, “ *Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, all is vanity,* ” and the Jews understand that Solomon attributed his words to the wisdom of God, which he calls songstress or preacher.

So that we may understand, that Christ, in saying, “ *Wherefore, behold I send unto you,* ” &c., means : and since you are such, I wish you to know what the Wisdom of God has determined concerning you ; it is this ; that since

He has sent, does send, and will send, prophets, wise men, and scribes, or educated men, to put you in the way of truth, and you not only have not pleased to listen to them, but you have treated them with every form of cruelty, killing them, crucifying them, and persecuting them, that there fall upon you the chastisement of God which these your malpractices and crimes deserve; so that all the blood of the righteous men that has been shed upon earth from the beginning of the world unto the present hour may be chastised in you. Thus do I understand these words.

Opinions differ as to whom this Zacharias, the son of Barachias, was. I however think him to have been a person, who was slain in the time of Christ, and even after the death of John the Baptist. And Christ, by adding, "*Verily I say unto you*," &c., showed clearly that He meant the destruction of Jerusalem, which it is said happened seventy-five years after the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: and this is the more confirmed by the exclamation against Jerusalem, which He adds, saying, "*Jerusalem, Jerusalem*," &c. Where two things are to be understood; the one, that under the name of Jerusalem, Christ meant the whole Hebrew nation; and the other, that He spoke of what had happened, and of what was about to happen.

By that: "*How often would I have gathered*," &c., it appears that men can resist the will of God, so that God cannot do with men what He would, where combining this with what Christ says in John vi. 44, "*No man can come to Me, unless the Father, who hath sent Me, draw him*," I think that it might be said, that we men are so far from willing what God wills, viz., that we submit ourselves to His will; that He cannot bring us to it whilst He exerts ordinary power, which He appears to have exercised towards Jerusalem, since He could not succeed in His design; whilst He reduces us by the exercise of absolute power, which, as Holy Scripture frequently states, no

one can resist; and this is what God exerts upon all those whom He brings to Christ; bringing them to Christ by force, not rigorous, but loving, sweet, and grateful.

I, however, can well affirm this concerning myself, that I was so compelled to come to Christ, that I am certain that I could not have resisted it had I wished; and thinking this to be the same with every one of those, who are incorporated into Christ, I think that God exerts absolute power with them, forcing them and compelling them to leave the kingdom of the world and to enter into the kingdom of God; to leave the image of Adam and to assume the image of Christ, by acceptance of the grace of the gospel. As to the manner in which I understand that God forces us and compels us, I remit myself to what I have stated in a consideration (xxiii.)

It may likewise be said here that some persons assign two wills to God, and that they call one, "*voluntas signi*," the will of intimation, and the other "*voluntas beneplaciti*," the will of complacency. So that Christ's meaning may be, that God had made many demonstrations to Jerusalem, of His desire to bring her back and to unite her to Himself, but that she would not; for men can resist *this* will of God, manifested by signs and external admonitions, such as were those made to Jerusalem; to which prophets, wise men and scribes were sent; whilst it is impossible to resist the will of God, that is deliberate and determined, because such is His will and pleasure.

According to this distinction, it is to be understood that whenever Holy Scripture states that men resist the will of God, it means the one that is called "*the will of intimation*;" and that whenever it states that men cannot resist the will of God, because it carries out all He wills, it means, that which is called "*the will of complacency*."

This apprehension is good, but the former pleases me more and edifies me more; and I hold it to be more certain, as well from my personal experience of it, as also because the depravity of our depraved nature is more dis-

covered by it; whilst the glory of God in His goodness and in His liberality is more illustrated by it; since it is so, that God seeing that men resist His ordinary power, exerts His absolute power when He wills, and upon whom He wills; giving them to recognise His goodness and mercy, putting Christ before their eyes, and showing to them the happiness of the life eternal, and thus with a loving and gracious violence, He makes them do His will.

When Christ says, "*Behold your house is left unto you desolate,*" He means, since you have not willed, what the wisdom of God, God Himself willed, but have resisted it, know assuredly that the wisdom of God, God Himself, will depart from you, and will leave you to follow after your own fancies. That, "*For I say unto you that ye shall not henceforth see Me,*" &c., is obscure; if we understand that all the words are spoken in the name of the wisdom of God, we shall understand Him as meaning, that those multitudes would be incapable of (comprehending) the wisdom of God, unless they recognised Christ; and even though we understand them, as spoken in the name of Christ Himself, this may be the sentence that Christ delivers: well then, I assure you that you shall never see Me more, unless you first recognise Me, so as to be able joyfully to applaud my coming into the world; being sent as I am by God, and that ye say, "*Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord,*" so that, that "*until ye shall say,*" is tantamount to His having said: until you first say.

I am not fully satisfied in the apprehension of these words. Here human prudence might reclaim, and say: that God wronged the inhabitants of Jerusalem, by chastising them for the blood that had been shed by their ancestors, and not by them; to which it should be replied that God indeed exercised mercy to their forefathers, in not chastising, from time to time, the blood they continued to shed; and that He exercised no injustice in chastising it all upon them; as well because, though it be expressed

thus, it was not greater chastisement than their own misdeeds deserved, as also because we are His creatures, and He may dispose of us at His will, without its ever being possible to implead Him of injustice.

And here it may be noted how different are God's judgments from the judgments of man, and God's justice from the justice of man, which ought to be sufficient to mortify and to slay all that human prudence can adduce, as affecting its desire to judge the works of God, in presuming to call Him to account why He punished these and not those, why He constrains some with His absolute power, and not others; in which act, more than in any other, men manifest their arrogance and their impiety; whence these inquisitions are never made by persons incorporated by faith into Christ, for they are humble, and cherish piety, they therefore approve of all the works of God, as holy, just, and good; they adore, where they do not comprehend.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

XXIV. 1-14. — And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity

shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come.

I find more difficulty in understanding this chapter than any other of the New Testament; I will state what I do understand of it up to this present time: remitting myself to a better and more certain apprehension. As to the first, I understand that the disciples pointed out to Christ the temple as a magnificent structure, and that Christ took occasion from that to prophesy to them the destruction of the temple, saying, "*There shall not be left here one stone,*" &c., intimating that the destruction would be, in the highest degree, terrible.

And I understand that the disciples, having heard this prophecy, desired to know the precise time in which it was to be fulfilled; and that they, imagining to themselves that the fulfilment of that prophecy was to be at Christ's second advent, at the end of the world, came to Christ to ask Him every detail, respecting two things; of the destruction of Jerusalem, and of His coming to judgment at the end of the world.

And I understand that Christ answered on both subjects so blending the one with the other, that the disciples might confirm themselves in their thought, that they both should be accomplished at the same time.

The reason why Christ thus answered them I do not know; I do indeed think that the disciples were mainly led, by this reply, to think that the world would come to its end in their time, as I have commented upon St. Paul (1 Cor. xv. 51 and 52); nay, from 2 Peter iii. 9 it appears, that some Christians of the primitive church began to vacillate in their faith, seeing that Christ delayed His coming; and it is possible that Christ may have replied thus

confusedly to the disciples, in order to hold us ever expectant of His coming.

Which expectation works these two effects upon those whom it involves; the *one* is, that it keeps them spiritually joyous and contented; whilst the *other* is, that it, to a great extent, mortifies in those, who hope, all desires and aims of the flesh and of the world; whilst I experimentally know the divine efficacy of this expectation of Christ, and I hold it to be certain, that this hope is that divine virtue placed between faith and charity.

As to Christ's answer, I understand that all these words, which I have translated, affect the whole period of the manifestation of the gospel, commencing from the coming of the Holy Spirit up to the very day of judgment; throughout which period, just as all these things, which Christ has there prophesied to us as associated with the disciples of Christ, so are all these notifications which Christ here gives us, necessary for us.

And I understand that, by all these words, Christ's purpose is to put us on our guard, that we be neither heedless of His coming, nor that we lightly believe in it; from the inconveniences which might result to us from either of these two things; for that our heedlessness might result in making us licentious, whilst lightly to believe might result in separating us from Christ, by leading us to think that we come to Christ, when we take Antichrist for Christ.

And thus He says, "*Take heed that no man deceive you,*" &c. And that which follows, "*For many shall come,*" &c., I understand to be in gradual process of fulfilment, and that it will be fulfilled at last. And that; "*Ye shall hear of wars,*" &c., I understand to be intended to put us upon our guard, that although we shall see and hear tell that the whole world is wrapt in the flames of war, we are not to think that it will perish by war, because although wars will be as preludes and skirmishes to the end of the world, it will not be they, which will put an end to it.

Christ adding, "*For nation shall rise against nation,*" &c., agrees with what He has said: "*You shall hear of wars,*" to which He adds pestilences and famine, which are always connected with wars, and He adds earthquakes, that terrify and alarm men. When He says, "*All these are the beginning of sorrows,*" He means, these evils, which had and have to be accomplished from time to time in the world before the end of the world, will not be of all evils the worst to men of the world, but the beginning of evils; the end being the day of judgment, the day of the utmost grief for men of the world, and of the highest joy for the children of God.

Christ adding, "*Then shall they deliver you up,*" &c., appears to mean that throughout all these periods the hatred which the men of the world will conceive against the children of God, the saints of God, will increase extraordinarily, as though surmising that they desire that the world should perish, and therefore they will most cruelly persecute and slay them.

And I understand that this persecution will be beyond all comparison more terrible and more cruel in the period just prior to the judgment, than that which the Christians of the primitive church and than that which those have suffered from time to time, from that time to the present; that which is most fearful consisting in this, that they, who shall bear the name of Christians, pretending to religion and Christian sanctity, will persecute those, who shall confess the Christian faith, and shall live like Christians, imitating Christ; and thus will it come to pass, that the glory of the Christian church shall be greater at its close, than at its commencement.

From that: "*And then shall many be scandalised,*" I am confirmed in my thought, that all this persecution shall be wrought by false Christians against true Christians, many of whom shall be scandalised, shall be offended, when they see that God permits them to be thus treated by those, who shall call themselves Christians.

*“They shall be betrayed,”* is equivalent to, they shall be sold; false Christians shall sell true ones, and they shall hate them; and truly such a confusion and general scandal, amongst persons not well grounded and fortified in the Christian faith, by having it confirmed by their own experience of Christian life, presents itself to me, in this last persecution of the church, that I scarcely dare think of it; nay through weakness and timidity my mind is unequal to it, especially when I associate with it what Christ adds, *“And many false prophets shall rise,”* &c., for it occurs to me, that false Christians will follow them, whilst they both, pretending to render service to God and to Christ, shall persecute true Christians, not being able to tolerate or endure that they should not follow what they do, and that they should not live as they do.

He calls those “prophets,” who shall pretend to preach the gospel and to understand the Holy Scriptures. That: *“And because iniquity shall abound,”* I understand this to be said inversely, such being in Hebrew idiomatic: I mean to say that Christ understood, that *“from love waxing cold in many,”* the result was abounding iniquity; whilst He says that from abounding iniquity the love waxed cold.

I understand this thus, because I understand that Christ here speaks of bad Christians; whose depravity, I understand, commences in their neglect of Christian faith; whence results their waxing cold in Christian love; from which coldness results depravity in Christian manners, and thus malice and malignity in their minds; and this is ever thus, that when we strive to keep our Christian faith alive in our minds, we increase in Christian love and in Christian manners; whilst, if we neglect our Christian faith, we grow cold in Christian love, and we thus lose Christian manners.

I have treated this subject in *two replies.* And although this interpretation appears to me to be good, I hold it to be better, to say Christ means, that from iniquity,

malignity and perversity, abounding in men of the world, it will result, that many saints of God, terrified by the fury with which they will be persecuted by men of the world, will wax cold in their love.

Christ adding, "*But he that shall endure unto the end,*" &c., means, that they shall be saved, that they shall attain eternal life, who shall not, either by the persecutions of false prophets, or by the persecutions of false Christians, sever themselves from Christian faith and Christian love.

And Christ, concluding this His admonition, which virtually runs till the day of judgment, adds: "*And this gospel shall be preached,*" &c., meaning, that before the end of the world come, the gospel has to be preached throughout the world; the good news of the remission of sins and reconciliation to God, which is generally intimated to all men; in order that there may be no one, who shall be able to find fault, save with himself.

Where I understand that, because men might plead frailty in their defence, their being conceived and born in sin, according to that in Psalm. li. 5, "*Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me;*" the gospel takes this exoneration away from them, for it offers them remission of sins, which they decline to accept, and there remains then no discolouration to them; and in this way the gospel will be a testimony against all nations, for it will show them their infidelity, impiety, and malignity.

Here there remains this scruple: how shall the gospel be a testimony against those nations, who shall have died without having had any notification of it, as instanced in the Indians, who have died without hearing Christ named, and even in many nations who die before Christian truth is propounded to them, with the remission of sins and reconciliation to God, which they enjoy who believe in it, wherein the gospel consists? But here it is necessary that man bring his understanding to submit, and that confessing his ignorance, he adore that which he does not understand, resting assured by Christ's words, that as

soon as the gospel shall be preached all over the world, the end of the world will come.

XXIV. 15-22.—When ye, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth let him understand), then let them who are in Judea flee into the mountains: let him who is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house: neither let him who is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath-day. For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

It appears that these words affect the first question which the disciples made concerning the destruction of Jerusalem; and thus it appears, that in what Christ says of the abomination of destruction, or abomination of desolation, quoting it from Daniel, He alludes to a statue of Hadrian which is said to have been in the temple at Jerusalem some years. And it appears that because Daniel's words are obscure, Christ added, "*He that readeth, let him understand;*" I however do not understand them, neither can I understand how Hadrian's statue placed in the temple at Jerusalem should be the token of its ruin, which had already been accomplished. I do indeed understand, that Christ, desiring to express a terrible and fearful ruin and persecution, adduces those things that occur when

a city is taken by assault, and when it is made a scene of massacre, for that its inhabitants, having lost the hope of saving their property, only care to save their lives, fleeing to the mountains, hiding themselves on their house-tops, and not even caring to take their clothes; and for that it goes hard with pregnant women, because they cannot flee; and with those who give suck, because natural affection forbids them to desert their offspring.

And Christ, being desirous of expressing the fury of persecution, yet more forcibly adds, "*Pray that your flight,*" &c., wherein He accommodates Himself to the time in which He spoke, in which it was not lawful to walk upon the Sabbath more than a given number of steps; nay I hold the expression to be common parlance; meaning, "may God preserve you from being compelled to flee in winter, when the roads are bad, and on the Sabbath, when to travel is illicit." And setting forth the reason for these admonitions, He says, "*For then shall be great tribulation,*" &c.; and when He adds, "*And if those days,*" &c., it may be understood, that if God had not shortened the tribulation of that time, not permitting that the persecution should extend further, not one Jew would have survived; and in adding, "*But for the elect's sake,*" &c., it may be understood, that God would stop the fury of that persecution, in order that the Jews, whom He had elected to bring to Christ and to give them eternal life with Christ, should not perish in it.

I remain dissatisfied with all this interpretation, for it appears to me, that these last words at least would have harmonised better with the day of judgment, as well because I do not understand that the destruction of Jerusalem has been greater than was that of the deluge, nor than will be that of the day of judgment; and I do understand, that the judgment will be greater than that of Jerusalem, and than that of the deluge; as also because that "*there should no flesh be saved,*" which is the same as though He should have said, not a man will be saved, is

more connected with the day of judgment than with the ruin of Jerusalem, it being a common mode of speaking; as likewise because that, "*but for the elect's sake*," harmonises much better with the day of judgment, by which God will abbreviate and cut short the persecution with which the Christian faith shall be persecuted, and Christian living shall be persecuted, in order that His elect may not perish in it, and thus that all flesh perish not. These words, which relate to the judgment, with those which relate to Jerusalem and even to the persecutions of true Christians that have been, and that shall be to the end of the world, are so commixed, that man can scarcely distinguish one from the other.

XXIV. 23-28.—Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

These words peculiarly relate to the period of the final judgment and end of the world; by them we learn five things.

*First*, that we are not to credit any man presenting himself to us as Christ, though we should see him work much greater miracles than those, of which we read, wrought by Christ.

*Second*, that they, who feeling their inward calling, know themselves to be God's elect, may rest assured, that however much men of the world, aided by the devils of hell, may labour to deceive them, they shall not be able to do it.

*Third*, that the delusion of God's elect might consist in going to seek the self-constituted Christ, located in the desert or hid in some, the most secret, closet of the house, because they would incur the risk of following him, and in following him, of departing from Christ.

*Fourth*, that Christ's coming will be rapid, illustrious, bright, and manifest throughout the world, like to lightning, which in one moment shows itself from east to west.

*Fifth*, that at the day of judgment, God's elect shall be assembled around Christ, as vultures congregate around a carcase. That, "*They shall deceive the very elect*," &c., seems to respond to what He has stated, that for the elect's sake those days of persecution shall be shortened, the remedy for it being the quickness of Christ's coming. By that, "*In the desert, and in the secret chambers*," all those other places are to be understood, whither false Christians shall call true ones, leading them away to Antichrist, under pretext of leading them to Christ.

XXIV. 29-31.—Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the

four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Christ means, that when the affliction and persecution shall have ceased, which will be before His coming, it will come to pass that the sun shall be darkened, &c., and that then, when there shall be no light of the sun and brightness of the moon, He will come with His light and brightness into the world, and that, in this light and brightness, His glory and His majesty shall be seen, which I understand Him to call, "*the sign of the Son of man*," meaning His glorified humanity. And Christ purposing to show that this, His coming, will have two results, *one*, the misery of the ungodly, and the *other*, the glory of the righteous, says, "*And then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn*," &c.; and by mourn, the Greek word signifies to wail madly, as do they who tear out their hair, who lacerate their flesh, and who bite their hands.

By tribes, I understand nations or peoples. And in saying, "*From the four winds*," He means, from the four cardinal points; and when He says, from "*one end of the heavens*," &c., He means from one extremity of the heavens to the other, for in Greek, the same word [*akpos*] means both height and extremity; and it appears that Christ, in these words, has responded to the two things which He had touched upon in those, which preceded, as to His coming, which He compared to the lightning, and as to the assemblage of His elect around Him, like to vultures about the carcase.

XXIV. 32-36.—Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: When its branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all

these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

There are four things in these words. *First*, the comparison of the fig-tree, wherein Christ's meaning is, that just as we know the coming of summer by the fig-tree, so by the fulfilment of all these tokens, of which He has spoken, shall we know of His coming to judgment.

*Second*, that the ruin of Jerusalem should come, before that generation of men, who were then living, should pass away, as, in point of fact, it came. And although it appears strange to refer these words to the ruin of Jerusalem, I know of no other expedient whereby to get out of this difficulty; for the expedient employed by those, who, by generation, understand the Jews, making Christ say: this Jewish race shall not be wholly destroyed, unless all these things be first fulfilled; but the Greek text does not permit it, which properly means: this generation, these men, who are now alive, and it is commonly said that a generation is the space of a century; whilst the expedient which others adopt, who say that all the things which Christ here mentions, as to persecutions, as to wars and rumours of wars, and as to false Christs and to false prophets, were, even as Josephus writes, seen before the destruction of Jerusalem; neither does this harmonise thus, for Josephus does not write that those false Christs and false prophets wrought the great signs and prodigies or miracles of which Christ has here spoken, as because the same inconvenience is incident to this expedient as in referring these words to the ruin of Jerusalem, since it is so, that, in that declaration, "*Till all these things be fulfilled*," it seems, that all that He has said of the sun, of the moon, and of the stars, with all that remains pertaining to the universal judgment, has also to be included; and,

therefore, I think it to be a good expedient to refer it to what He has said of the destruction of Jerusalem. Whilst it is a better expedient for a man to confess his ignorance and say: this, I do not understand.

The *third* thing that there is in these words is the stability and firmness of Christ's words, which are more stable and more firm than heaven and earth.

The *fourth* thing is the profound mystery that God maintains in His own purposes, since He has not even revealed to His angels, the day when the final judgment shall take place; and, if it be hidden from the angels, how very great would be our temerity, were we to pretend to know it.

St. Paul likewise understands that the angels never heard of the call of the nations to participation in the grace of the gospel, until they saw it, whilst he proves that some Jews, as, for instance, David and Isaiah, understood it: and, if these understood it, and prophesied concerning it, it is a great thing to say that the angels should not have understood it, at least from the Scriptures; as a matter of fact, our blindness is very great.

XXIV. 37-44.—But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know

this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

Christ here touches upon three remarkable topics, by all which He designs to keep us alert, daily and hourly, in expectation of His coming to judgment.

The *first*, that His coming to judgment will be like the coming of the deluge, for that, just as in the deluge almost all perished, because they were heedless, as though it were not about to come, they only saving themselves, who were heedful, expecting, knowing and believing, that it was about to come; so at His coming to judgment almost all will perish, because they will be heedless, as though He were not about to come; they only saving themselves, who shall be heedful, expecting, knowing, and believing that He is about to come, whilst it will make men of the world [feel] secure. *I have spoken of this same similitude in 1 Peter iii. 20, 21, and here there comes appositely a Consideration [civ.] which I have written.*

The *second*, that at Christ's coming, the good and the bad, the just and the unjust, will be mixed up together; that the good and the just will be taken up and borne away to immortality and eternal life, whilst the bad and the unjust will be left in affliction and misery. Moreover I understand this election of God does stand connected with predestination. And I call him good and just, who, by his Christian life, imitating Christ, bears testimony to his Christian faith, of his incorporation into Christ.

The *third*, that it is the duty of every Christian to keep Christ's coming always before his eyes, daily and hourly expecting Him, without ever lapsing for a moment, were it possible, into heedlessness; and how useful and pro-

fitable this continuous heedfulness is to Christians, to maintain them in Christian duty, in order to make them live in the present life as dead, leading a life very similar to that which is about to be lived in the life eternal, they know by personal experience, who, being true Christians, strive to live Christianly.

As to the comparison wherein the day of judgment is compared to the burglar, *I remit myself to what I have stated on 1 Thess. v. 2-4*, that Christ's meaning is: that just as the master of the house, being aware that a burglar is about to come to break into it, is alert to defend it; so every one of us, being aware that this day of judgment is about to come, and that it will involve those in perpetual misery whom it shall find unprepared, ought to be alert and prepared to defend himself on that day, as did Noah against the deluge.

When He says "*marrying*," He speaks of men; and when He says "*being given in marriage*," He means women. In saying, "*and they knew not*," He means, the danger in which they were. In saying, "*grinding at the mill*," He alludes to those handmills, revolved by women. He, whom He called "*your Lord*," He subsequently calls "*the Son of man*."

**XXIV. 45-51.**—Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an

hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites : there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

It appears that this parable exclusively concerns the disciples of Christ ; I mean those, who, by the gift of God, are apostles and teachers in the Christian church, who preach the gospel and teach Christian life ; every one of whom is like the butler or steward, whom the Lord places over his other servants ; for that it is his duty to be engaged in preaching the gospel and in teaching Christian life to those who are committed to him. And when he shall act thus, Christ, coming to judgment, will confer on him a high grade of glory ; just as, on the other hand, the bad disciple, who, heedless of Christ's coming, to whom it appears that because Christ delays to come, that He will not come, shall abuse the gifts that he will have received from God, tyrannising over those who depend upon him, whilst living viciously and licentiously with the vicious and licentious, disregarding Christ's coming, He will be punished most terribly.

Where it is to be understood that just as the glory will be greater in those, who shall well employ the gifts that God shall have given them, so the punishment will be greater in those, who shall misemploy the gifts that God shall have given them. In point of fact it is readily seen that Christ wills, that we His Christians be ever vigilant, never unmindful of His coming, and that we strive to well employ the gifts which He shall have conferred upon us.

Where Christ says, "*Over his household*," He means over his family, over those of his house ; and where He says, "*the other servants*," the Greek word signifies those, who like himself were his fellow-servants. Where Christ says, "*And shall cut him asunder*," He means, shall severely punish him, as severely as they are punished, who are

drawn and quartered. I understand that, "*With the hypocrites*," to be tantamount to His saying, with the saints of the world, who are hypocrites, for that attending to external sanctity, but not to inward, they appear to be what they are not; and this name attaches to them, even when they have not that intention, I mean when they do not intend that their works should be held to be holy in the eyes of the world, if they pretend to justify themselves by them before God.

And here I understand how severe will be the punishment with which the saints of the world will be punished, since Christ, wishing to enhance the punishment of the wicked servant, says, that his appointed portion will be with the hypocrites, who are the saints of the world, who shall be placed in perpetual misery, defined by wailing, weeping, and gnashing of teeth.

This is what I attain up to the present to understand about all this chapter; should I at any time understand anything better, I will not fail to add it here as I shall now add two things.

The *one* is, that I, seeing that to the curious questions of the disciples, who desired to know the time of the ruin of Jerusalem and of the day of judgment, Christ so answered, that from His reply they could neither gather the one nor the other; because as to the ruin of Jerusalem, it seems that He does not tell them, but that they should understand Daniel's prophecy; and, as to the day of judgment, He does not tell them, but of many signs that shall previously be seen, advising how they should regulate themselves at that time, and bring them down to the exhaustion of all their curiosity in a continuous waiting, daily and hourly, for His coming to judgment; I here learn that I ought to mortify and to slay all manner of curiosity in myself, being in the same way admonished to mortify it and slay it, in the Christians, who shall hold intercourse and converse with me. And I here learn curiosity to be all that, wherein there is no Christian

edification, as were these questions of Christ's disciples.

The *other* thing is, that all this chapter being a prophecy of the ruin of Jerusalem and of the day of judgment, it is no marvel that Christ should proceed throughout it, mixing the one with the other, in the way that some prophets, nay the leading ones, proceed in their prophecies, mixing some things with others, as is seen in Isaiah and Jeremiah, who, prophesying the liberation of the Jewish nation from the Babylonish captivity, their return to Jerusalem, the rebuilding of the city, and of the temple, with the two advents, the humble one which we have seen, and which we see in those who are His members; and the glorious one, which we shall see in Him, and in those who are His members; and thus the happiness of the kingdom of Christ in the present life, as to the communication of the Holy Spirit which is communicated to those who believe, with the glory of the kingdom of God in the life eternal, as to the seeing God face to face, the knowing of Him as He knows us, so do they go on mixing up one thing with another, that all human prudence combined does not suffice to enable any man to distinguish the one from the other.

Where I understand that just as the spirit of prophecy is necessary to make distinction in what the prophets state, so likewise is the spirit of prophecy necessary to make distinction in what Christ here states, by the spirit of prophecy.

I likewise understand that just as the happy return of the Jewish nation to Jerusalem was as a shadow of the most happy return of the Christian people, after the resurrection, to the kingdom of God and life eternal, which is the heavenly Jerusalem; so the special ruin of Jerusalem, with the persecutions, with the hardships, and with the miseries that went before it, was as a shadow of the general ruin of the whole world, with the persecutions, with the hardships, and with the miseries which will anticipate it.

For all which, we must needs all be armed with these admonitions that Christ here gives to His disciples, and by them to all of us, taking for chief admonition, the being continually alert, expecting this most auspicious coming of Jesus Christ our Lord, certain that He comes to give us immortality and life eternal; because this, as I have stated, I understand to be the Christian hope, which the apostle St. Paul places between faith and charity, as I have stated in a Consideration [lxx.]

## CHAPTER XXV.

XXV. 1-13.—Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterwards came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

Christ's design in this parable, as appears by the words with which He concludes it, is the same that we have seen in the preceding parable, to counsel us that we be alert and perfectly prepared, ever looking out for His coming to judgment. Whilst none hope for it, but they, who desire it; and none desire it, save those, who, through the gospel, hold it to be certain, that for them it will be glorious.

Where the mode practised by Christ in moulding His similitudes has to be noted, for He says, "*Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened to ten virgins*," meaning, that, at His coming to judgment, that shall betide Christians, comprising good and bad, which happened to ten virgins at a wedding; for that, just as all these ten prepared themselves with their lamps to receive the bridegroom, so all Christians prepare themselves by baptism and by the other sacraments, and by the other ceremonies of the church, to receive Christ, when He shall come to take away with Him His bride, which is the Church; and for that, just as the five virgins, being foolish, took not the oil with them, wherewith they should light their lamps; whilst the other five virgins, being wise, took oil with them in their vessels; so bad Christians, being foolish, do not take with them that living faith, with which, man accepting the grace of the gospel, makes the righteousness of Christ his own, while it keeps the man in continuous hope of Christ's coming, certain that it will be glorious for him; and it, mortifying and vivifying the man, works in him those effects of love which St. Paul sets forth in 1 Corinthians xiii., which faith with its effects it is, that makes the lamps to burn, that the bodies rise glorious: and good Christians, being wise with that divine wisdom, take that living faith with them (ever supplicating God that He increase it in them), which keeps their lamps alive, ever holding in lively memory the blood which Christ shed for them; and for that, just as the bridegroom delaying his coming, all the ten virgins, overcome by drowsiness, slept, so Christ's coming to judgment being delayed, all we Chris-

tians, bad and good, die; and for that, just as when the bridegroom came, the virgins were awakened by shouting, and they all awoke; so, upon Christ's coming to judgment, we Christians shall all be called, by sound of trumpet, to go forth to receive Him, and we shall all rise; and for that, just as the foolish virgins, wishing to light their lamps, fell short of oil, seeing that they did not burn, so bad Christians, wishing to present themselves before Christ, will fall short of faith and the effects of faith, seeing that they will have misgivings to present themselves with their external justifications, issuing from self-love; and for that, just as the oil, which the wise virgins carried, did not help the foolish ones, so the Christian faith and the effects of faith, which good Christians shall bear, will not help bad Christians.

The rest of the parable harmonises well as to human things, but it does not harmonise as to divine things; I specify the reply of the wise virgins, with the departure of the foolish ones to buy oil, and their return after having bought it. And if any one shall say: if it do not harmonise, why did Christ put it? I shall reply, that He put it, in order to utter that terrible declaration which will be made to bad Christians: "I do not know you."

And Christ knows none, save those, who, by divine inspiration, accept His holy gospel, which acceptance is efficacious in them, for that it incorporates them into Him, to make them live as He lived, to strive to live in the present life, a life very similar to that which they have to live in the life eternal, with purity and integrity, with humility and meekness, and with love and obedience to God in everything. Those, who are not such, Christ does not know, and, therefore, they shall not enter the marriage-feast of the life eternal, when Christ shall assemble His Church around Him, and, as St. Paul states, "shall deliver up the kingdom to His eternal Father" (1 Cor. xv. 24).

For which feast Christ admonishes us to be ever prepared by the oil of faith, which embraces remission of sins

and reconciliation to God, by Christ and through Christ; and which is efficacious in us to make us live Christianly; as to Adam mortified, as to Christ vivified; hoping with earnest desire for Christ's coming; certain that our lamps, which are our bodies, having the oil of Christian faith within them, will be glorious, bright, and resplendent, and not like those of bad Christians, which will be like the foolish virgins' lamps, obscure and dark.

And here it is well to say that the difference there is between the human faith of false Christians and the Christian faith of true Christians, is this: that human faith makes false Christians, who, believing by report, and by information, believe the history of Christ; but they do not believe the promise in Christ, they do not believe that they have been punished in Christ, that they are reconciled to God through Christ; nor do they apply themselves to the imitation of Christ, for they do not love either God or Christ, and, therefore, they do not hope for the day of judgment, nay, they dread it, and could wish that it should never come; whilst Christian faith makes true Christians, who, believing by inspiration and revelation, not only believe the history of Christ, but believe the promise of God in Christ and through Christ, by accepting the grace which the gospel offers them, and holding themselves to be righteous and to be reconciled to God, in Christ, and by Christ; and they apply themselves to the imitation of Christ, desirous of comprehending the perfection in which they are comprehended, by incorporation into Christ, and hence it is that they hope for the day of judgment as the day of their entire glorification, with the most earnest desire. Where He says "*There was a cry made*," in the Greek text it is said, "*there was shouting or vociferation*."

XXV. 14-30.—For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his

own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one ; to every man according to his several ability ; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. Then he who had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou

wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed : thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him who hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance : but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness : there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Christ's design in this parable is to exhort and to admonish those, who through His beneficence, have spiritual gifts imparted to them by Him, to employ them usefully amongst their neighbours, in preaching the gospel to all, and in teaching their brethren how to live Christianly, profiting and ministering the one to the other, according to the gifts which they have from God ; and to show that they, who will act thus, will be admitted to the glory of the life eternal, whilst they who shall act otherwise, shall be miserably ejected from it.

The man, who desires to travel to a far country, who distributes his property amongst his dependants and servants, is Christ, who, continuously from heaven, where He is seated at the right hand of His eternal Father, bestows His Spirit, with other divine treasures that God has placed at His disposition, amongst those, whom God draws to Him ; because these are His dependants, His servants. And the apportionment is as St. Paul says, "*According to the measure of the gift of Christ*" (Eph. iv. 7). And as he says in another place, "*According as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith*" (Rom. xii. 3), and this is the peculiar strength, ability, or capacity of

every one of us, who are the dependants and servants of Christ.

By him that received the five talents, and by him that received the two, are meant all those, who having received gifts from God, employ them well; acquiring by them, one more and the other less, according as the gifts are greater or less. These at the day of judgment will be praised by Christ and admitted to the life eternal, which is, "*the joy of his Lord*," where Christ is glorious and triumphant.

In the man, who received one talent, all they are typified, who, holding a bad opinion of Christ, like slaves, fear Him; they fear Him as a cruel and vindictive tyrant; and therefore, being afraid that if they put out the gifts, He has given them, at interest, men would the more quickly spend and squander them, so that they would lose their gifts, that they would not benefit others with them, they either remain silent with them, not wishing to communicate them, or they go and hide themselves up in deserts [as hermits] or in solitary places [as monks]. These at the day of judgment will be upbraided by Christ, and deprived of what they received, being then cast into hell-fire.

Here we learn two very important things. The *one*, that for as much as we men always regulate ourselves in relation to God and to Christ, according to the good or evil opinion that we hold of God and of Christ, it concerns every one of us to form within our minds a good opinion of God and of Christ; to do which, we ought, to avoid all reading of writings written by the spirit of man, and to apply ourselves to the reading of writings written by the Holy Spirit, and interpreted by that same Spirit, with which they were written; conformably with what the apostle St. Peter says in his second Epistle, chapter i. What I state concerning books, I also affirm of conversation; men as men cannot speak well of God or of Christ, even though they should labour to speak well, for it is from the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh;

and the Holy Spirit in man, for the same reason, cannot but speak well of Christ and of God. And it almost always proves true, that we are like the books we read, and the men with whom we associate, and with whom we converse.

The *other* thing, that we here learn, is: how dangerous is fear, since the fate of the bad servant awaits the fearful. They, who read the Holy Scriptures without the Christian spirit, seeing that almost all the piety of the saints under the law was based upon fear, proceed to deify fear, whilst they do not consider that fear was as peculiar and as annexed to those saints, who were under the law, as is love peculiar and annexed to evangelical saints, that as St. Paul says [in Romans vi.], "*They are not under the law but under grace*," nay, they do not consider that the fear of the Jewish saints did not spring from their holding a bad opinion of God, because they held Him to be tyrannical, cruel, and vindictive, but because they held a bad opinion of themselves, finding themselves to be most lively in their affections and appetites, for that Christ had not as yet mortified the flesh of His members, by slaying His own upon the cross<sup>1</sup>; of which mortification they feel the effects, who, by Christian faith, are incorporated into Christ.

Where, I feel most sure, that all, who shall tread the path of fear, which can never indeed be divine but human, however much they may wish to disguise it, by entitling it filial fear, they all will form the same opinion of God and of Christ, that the wicked servant had of his master; I shall ever counsel those, who shall find themselves endowed with spiritual and Christian gifts, to leave the road of fear and to seek the road of love; and it will most certainly prove, that one grain of love in them will be more efficient to make them lead a spiritual and divine life, than a hundred of fear. They, who do not love, because they do not know what it is to love, do not believe that this is possible; just as he that is not magnanimous, because he

does not know what magnanimity is, does not believe what is told him of magnanimity.

Christ, in making the master repeat the wicked servant's words, in order to justify his sentence, shows that the Holy Spirit convinces men of the world by their own words, conformably with that passage in Job v. 13 and 1 Cor. iii. 19, "*He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.*" That: "*For unto every one that hath, shall be given,*" is to be understood as the employment by Christ of a vulgar proverb, as though He had said, let the proverb be fulfilled which says, "They give to him that has, and from him that has not, they take what he has;" and although it appears strange to say, that from him that has not, they take what he has, it is not strange; for Christ means, from the man, who has no more than what he has received; like the wicked servant, from whom that is taken which he has, that being what he had received.

And here it has to be observed that it is not necessary that the parable harmonise, in that the talent of the wicked servant will be given to the good servant; for although this harmonise well in the man, who distributed his property, it does not harmonise in Christ, who does not need to take from some to give to others, He, being the richest and most abundant in spiritual and divine gifts; just as the sun does not need to deprive one person of its light, in order to make another person see more light.

XXV. 31-46.—When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto

them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Just as I understand that it was Christ's design in the

preceding parable to admonish those, who have spiritual gifts that they should minister with them and benefit their neighbours, in order to make them brethren; and to their brethren in order to lead them on to greater perfection; so do I understand that it is Christ's intention by these words to persuade those, who have this world's riches, that they minister and provide for the necessities of those, who are His members, persuading them, as indeed is truth, that they do not minister to them, but to Him, in them.

He does this by showing them, that at the day of judgment He will not acknowledge them as His, who in the present life have not recognised Him in His members; in those, who, by acceptance of His gospel, are incorporated into Him, and thus they will not have discharged the obligation of Christians towards them, in manifesting, towards them, the love which they persuade themselves they have to Him; while on that very day He will acknowledge as His, those, who shall have recognised Him, and have ministered to Him in His members; and thus He will give these eternal life, whilst He will send away those to eternal fire. This is Christ's design in all these words, in which there are many things worthy of much consideration.

*First*, the form of the universal judgment, I mean, I speak of the glory and of the majesty, with which Christ will come to it. *Second*, that good and bad, the just and the unjust, will rise again. *Third*, that Christ ever delighted in comparing Himself to a shepherd, wherein, we, who are Christ's, may console ourselves, assured that He takes the same care of us that the good shepherd takes of his sheep. *Fourth*, that these two qualities concur in them, who are the just; the *one*, that they are blessed of God, which blessing makes them just; and the *other*, that they are predestinated to life eternal, which greatly inspirits those, who inwardly experience God's blessing; whereby, they are certified that they will be heirs of the kingdom of God.

The *Fifth*, that Christ will show the righteousness of true Christians, by the mercy which they will have shown to Him, in providing necessaries for His members; I mean, that Christ, when alleging the works of mercy which His members shall have done to His members, will show that they have been righteous; because, had they not been so, they would not have done them; for that had they not been members of Christ, they would not have recognised them as members of Christ; and not recognising them, they could not have done for them, what Christ here states.

*Sixth*, that because they, who are righteous, when performing works of charity, do not pretend to justify themselves by them; neither do they even hold, that they perform them themselves, but that the Holy Spirit within them does so; as they do not hold them to be their own, they do not take them into account; and thus when spoken to about them, they marvel. Such is the condition of those, who work because they are righteous, not working from interested motives, but from affection; they, who work in order to be righteous, who work from interested motives, attach great importance to their good works; whilst they are not good, for they spring from self-love; for it is so, that they, who work from interested motives, work in order to be righteous, not being righteous; and the bad tree cannot yield good fruit.

*Seventh*, that Christ will condemn the unrighteousness, the impiety, and the infidelity of false Christians, who are the goats; for this judgment is between true and false Christians; He charging them with not having practical charity to His members; for, had they practised it, they would have ceased from unrighteousness, impiety, and infidelity, for no one can practise it, who does not depart from all this; whilst had they departed from it, they would have been true Christians. Where it has to be considered, that if Christ will treat false Christians, who shall not have practised mercy to His members with all

this rigour, what may they expect will betide them, who shall have persecuted Christ's members?

*Eighth*, that just as God's inheritance, which is eternal life, is prepared from the foundation of the world for Christ and for Christ's members, so eternal fire is prepared for the devil and for his angels; and here it appears that Christ calls men of the world and saints of the world, the devil's angels; and this name or this similitude is well applied, for the devil avails himself of them to obstruct God's works, by tempting, molesting, persecuting, and slaying them, who are God's elect, in order to sever them from Christ and from God.

*Ninth*, that although false Christians occasionally do some good to Christ, to those, who are members of Christ, forasmuch as they have no intention to serve Christ, not being moved by love to Christ, but by self-love, by interests attaching to the present life or to the future, that good which they do, is not placed to their credit; it is good in that it ministers to God's elect, and it is not good in that it does not proceed from a rightly disposed mind, and therefore it does not please God.

*Tenth*, that the false Christians, who, not recognising Christ in His members, shall not have ministered to Him in them, shall be chastised with eternal punishment; and that true Christians, who, recognising Christ in His members, shall have ministered to Him, in them, will be remunerated with eternal glory. Where it is not to be understood that false Christians will be condemned, because they will not have ministered to Christ, in His members; but they will be condemned, because, having accepted Christ with the lips, and not having accepted Him into their hearts, they will have remained in their sins, in their impiety and infidelity, manifested to be such, by their not having ministered to Christ, in His members; for had they not been such, they would have ministered to Him; neither is it to be understood that true Christians will be remunerated, because they will have ministered to Christ in His

members; but they will be saved, because, having accepted Christ into their hearts, they will have obtained remission of their sins, and they will have been pious, holy, and righteous, manifested to be such, by having ministered to Christ in His members; for had they not been such, they would not have ministered to Him.

So that the ministering to, or the not ministering to, Christ, in His members, does not make us either righteous or unrighteous, but it does testify to our righteousness or unrighteousness. They, who shall pretend to be righteous, by ministering to those whom they shall recognise, or shall think, to be members of Christ, will testify concerning themselves that they do not know Christ, and that they do not know what the righteousness of Christ is, for there is error in that pretension; whilst they, who shall doubt as to whether they are righteous or not, since it seems to them that they do not minister to those who are members of Christ, either because they know none, or because it does not occur to them wherein to minister to them; they likewise will testify concerning themselves, that they do not well know Christ; that they have not yet accepted the righteousness of Christ into their hearts; for it is so, that they, who know Christ well, and have well received Christ's righteousness into their hearts, know themselves to be righteous in Christ; they pretend to no justification by their works, and when they work, they do so from affection and they work without calculation; for they do not work, but the Spirit of Christ does so in them; which offers to them, and places before them, without their seeking for or procuring them, great occasions, wherein, by ministering affectionately to Christ, in His members, they show that they know Christ, that they love Christ, that they hold Christ's righteousness and innocence for their own, and that therefore they are pious, just, and holy; not of themselves, nor by their services, but because by believing they are incorporated into Christ, and they are

attent to comprehend the perfection, wherein they are comprehended, by incorporation, into Christ.

As to what might further be said upon these words I remit myself to what I have written in a Consideration [xcviii.] That, "*Then shall the King say,*" has to be considered; because, there, Christ speaking of Himself, styles Himself King. It has also to be taken into consideration, that under these works of mercy which Christ here specifies, we have to understand all those which redound in corporal utility to our brethren, because in these we minister to Christ. In saying, "*little ones,*" He means those, whom the world despises, as being lowly and scorned.

And forasmuch as Christ makes no mention here but of the good that is done to those, who, being His members, are His brethren, and suffer like Himself, it is well here to add this; that it behoves the Christian to do good to all; to some, as neighbours, and to others, as brethren; to neighbours, with the intention of attracting them and of inducing them to become brethren; and to brethren, with the intention of ministering to Christ in them; making it his aim to cause them to know and see that Christ fulfils to them, what He has promised them, in the present life; in order that thus they may be better assured that He will also fulfil what He has promised them in the life eternal; and, that being better assured, they be truer Christians; so that the brother be always preferred to the neighbour. This is in accordance with what St. Paul says in Gal. vi. 10, "*Let us do good unto all, but especially unto those who are of the household of faith!*"

This form of the final judgment, as to condemnation and to salvation, I understand to be expounded by Christ in St. Luke vii. 37-50, in the case of the woman and the Pharisee, as I shall show in that chapter.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

XXVI. 1-16.—And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, Ye know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified. Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtlety, and kill him. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people. Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, there came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this

woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her. Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you ? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

The evangelist tells us that the time having drawn near, upon which God, in His divine providence, had determined for the death of Christ, which is our life, He again prophesied concerning it to His disciples, purposing to prepare their minds, so that, in seeing Him die, they should not be overmuch disturbed or scandalised ; and he likewise states, that they, who were the heads of the Jewish synagogue, consulted and deliberated how they might craftily seize on Christ and slay Him ; he also states that because great multitudes assembled at Jerusalem upon the day of the Passover, the Jewish high priests feared that the people, who highly esteemed Christ, might, under such circumstances, rise in tumult, and they resolved to let the Passover pass.

Now when I consider that they did not let it pass, nay, that they carried their purpose against Christ into execution on the evening of the Passover, I recognise how little the counsels and resolutions of men avail, when God has ordained the opposite of that which they counsel and resolve. God had ordained that Christ should die at that great festival, in order that the type harmonising with what had been typified, the work of God should be more clear and manifest ; and however much the Jews consulted and resolved to the contrary, they ultimately did what God had ordained.

The evangelist having narrated the deliberation of the Jews, relates the incident of the saintly woman, who poured the vaseful of ointment upon Christ's head, be-

cause from that Judas took occasion to sell Christ, as is more clearly reported in John xii. 4-6. And in the case of this saintly woman, it is to be considered, how differently human prudence and the Holy Spirit judge of things of God; for the disciples, in judging this saintly woman's work, by human prudence, condemned it, saying, that that ointment was wasted, and that it would have been better to sell it, and to have given its price to the poor; whilst Christ, judging by the Holy Spirit, defended the saintly woman's deed, showing that it had been wrought in love and by inspiration; as though a Christian were to come to my house, in whom I should recognise that Christian spirit which I recognise in the Apostle St. Paul, and that I should show him my affection, by offering him a banquet, upon which I should spend [fifty pounds] one hundred ducats, and that my servants should grumble against me, saying, that that sum would have been better spent upon the poor; and that Christian, in defending my loving feelings, should say to my servants: Don't grumble against your master for having given me this entertainment, for of this world's poor you will ever have numbers, upon whom you will be able to show your love and your pity, but you will not always have a true Christian, to whom you can show your Christian love and piety, adding, that that is not wasted, but well laid up, which one spends upon the person of Christ, on those, who are incorporated into Christ, and who have the Spirit of Christ.

In such a case, I understand that we may avail ourselves, as against human prudence, of the incident that befel this saintly woman with her ointment, and in cases that are like this; for I understand that, since Christ no longer converses bodily with men, that the converse which we have with those, who have the Spirit of Christ, being incorporated into Christ, and representing to us the image of Christ, we hold it with Christ Himself, with whom we cannot now hold it bodily; for, as He says, "*Me ye have*

*not always*,” meaning thereby, His bodily presence; and, therefore, we cannot say that we converse with Christ, but that we converse with those, who are true members of Christ. If I, in witnessing a case similar to that of this holy woman, or to that of the banquet of which I have spoken, examine myself, whether I should judge of it as the disciples judged, or as Christ judged, I learn what amount of human prudence, and what amount of the Holy Spirit, there is in me.

And Christ by adding, “*For in that she hath poured this ointment*,” &c., shows clearly that this saintly woman had wrought that work, not only from the affectionate love proceeding from the faith which she had in Christ, but by the movement of the Holy Spirit, which, in that case, designed to show that Christ’s death and burial were at hand; so that in saying, “*She did it for my burial*,” He may mean: she has predicted My approaching burial; for the Jews were accustomed to anoint their dead. And Christ, designing to enhance yet more the work of this saintlike woman, says, “*Verily I say unto you, Wherever this gospel shall be preached*,” &c., affirming, that the loving affection, combined with the movement of the Holy Spirit, which had animated that saintly woman, was of such worth, that ever thenceforth, wherever the gospel should be preached throughout the world, the incident, connected with this holy woman, should likewise be spoken of; as practically, it is spoken of.

Where it is to be understood that Christ, in saying, “*This gospel*,” does not mean this evangelical history; for it does not appear that there is aught in this that should be matter of prediction; but, this gospel which I preach, intimating to men the near approach of the kingdom of God; with the gospel, which, after My death, resurrection, and ascension, and the coming of the Holy Spirit, shall be preached; in which remission of sins and reconciliation to God, through My death and passion, will be intimated to men. Christ, in saying, “*For a memorial of her*,”

means, that this incident shall be spoken of in order that this holy woman shall be remembered.

They, who avail themselves of the case of this holy woman, to save the expenses that Christians incur about things that do not redound to the use of those, who are Christ's poor, being Christ's brethren, and possessing Christ's Spirit, they do not consider that Christ here affirms that they had not Him always [with them], nor do they consider that Christ bears testimony to this holy woman, that she worked, being inspired ; nay, with the spirit of prophecy, although she did not understand the prophecy. The evangelist, by adding, "*Then one of the twelve*," &c., shows that Judas thence took occasion to go and sell Christ ; and it is ever thus, that they, who, amongst Christ's members, sell Him, begin to do so from apparent piety ; nay, the devil deceives them, with that apparent piety, so blinding them, that, in selling Christ, they do not see what they do, as Judas did not see ; and, when he saw it, he hanged himself ; the devil opening his eyes, in order that he should hang himself ; just as he had closed them, in order that he should sell Christ.

Just as we say a glass, or a crystal, meaning a vase of glass or of crystal, so here he says an alabaster, meaning a vase of alabaster. The pieces of silver were coins of silver money of the value of the [Spanish] real or [Neapolitan] carlin [twopence-halfpenny English.]

XXVI. 17-30.—Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover ? And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand ; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them ; and

they made ready the passover. Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I ? And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of man goeth as it is written of him : but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed ! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, who betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I ? He said unto him, Thou hast said. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat ; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it ; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. And when they had sung a hymn, they went out unto the mount of Olives.

The evangelist reports two things that Jesus did at His last supper; the *one*, to show or signify that Judas was he, who was about to betray Him ; and the *other*, to institute the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist. One might say that it was Christ's design by the first to exert ordinary power to the last to divert Judas from his evil resolution, in order that he be utterly and wholly inexcusable at the day of judgment ; and I understand that it was Christ's design by the second to leave His death, His blood shed

for us, impressed upon our minds, in order that whenever\* the remission of sins and reconciliation to God is intimated to us in the Gospel, as being a general indulgence and pardon, we might be able to place the fullest reliance in the pardon, considering that Christ is the justifier, and seeing His blood shed. And here it is well to repeat what I have frequently stated, that God in executing the rigour of His justice upon Christ, was more intent upon giving me assurance, than satisfaction to Himself.

As to what more it might be pertinent to state here, as to the use of this most holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, I remit myself to what I have said upon 1 Cor. xi. In saying, "*The first day of unleavened bread*," or of loaves without leaven, he means the first of the seven days on which the Jews, in celebrating the feast of their going forth out of Egypt, ate bread without leaven. As to the reason why this festival was called Paschal, I remit myself to what I have said upon 1 Cor. iv.; whilst as to the time at which Christ celebrated the passover, and as to the time at which the Jews celebrated it, I remit myself to what they say, who are informed upon this subject.

Where He says, "*To such a person*," it might be thought that Christ had stated the surname of that man in whose house He desired that the passover should be prepared, but that we learn from St. Mark's and St. Luke's gospels that He did not mention it; besides which, we learn that Christ had the things, that were about to take place, present to His mind as though they already had been done. In saying, "*My time is at hand*," He means, My death is at hand. That, "*He that dippeth with me in the dish*," &c., is worthy of being considered as an example to be followed of Christ's patience and meekness; seeing that He not only admitted Judas to His table, but likewise to His dish; and this after that he had made the agreement to sell Him. And when I consider what I should have felt under such circumstances, I recognise my imperfection, how little is my mortification and how great my liveliness. And when

\*Christ added, "*The Son of Man goeth as it is written of Him*," &c., His design was to show that His death was by Divine ordinance, although it appeared to be contrived, machinated, and concerted by men.

And because some one might think and say, Then men are blameless, Christ adds, "*But woe unto that man*," &c., meaning, that although His death was by Divine ordinance, the man would not fail to be severely punished, who should be the minister or executor of that Divine ordinance; because such an one would not purpose the fulfilment of the will of God, but his own damned, perverse, and diabolic one, and Christ states of such a man that it had been better for him never to have been born than to perpetrate such huge treachery.

And these words give occasion to those who believe more in what Aristotle says, when he states, "*It is a lesser evil to be, and to be badly off, than not to be*," than in what Christ here states clearly to the contrary; they do not fatigue themselves by striving to make Aristotle say what Christ says; nay, they labour to make Christ say what Aristotle says, as though Christ's authority depended upon His conformity with Aristotle. Whilst I, tenaciously adhering to what Christ says, understand that it would have been a lesser evil to Judas, and to all the ungodly and perverse like him, not to be than to be, let Aristotle say what he may.

By those words, "*This is my blood*," &c., it appears that Christ alluded to those in Exodus xxiv. 8. "*This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath covenanted with you concerning all these words*," &c., as though Christ had said, the testament or covenant established by Moses, between God and the Jewish nation, was ratified by the blood of brute animals; whilst the testament or covenant that I now establish between God and men, is ratified by My blood, which certifies them that God has pardoned them; and believing this, they enjoy His pardon.

Where it is important to observe the perversity of the

human mind ; by this, that the Jews, confiding in God's word, held themselves to be reconciled to God by the blood of the animals which they saw shed for their sins ; whilst there is scarcely one, among those who call themselves Christians, who, confiding in the word of God, holds himself to be pardoned as to his sins, to be reconciled to God by the blood of the Son of God, which they see shed for them ; the Son of God Himself, affirming that it is shed for the sins of many, means, if all those, who, seeing the blood shed for their sins, shall hold themselves to be pardoned by it, and therefore just and holy ; and thenceforth devote themselves to live righteously and holily.

I understand that there is this difference between the remission of sins that was wrought by the blood of animals and that which is so by the blood of Christ ; that they, who were pardoned by the blood of animals, attained from God, that which was promised to those, who fulfilled the law, temporal benefits ; whilst they, who are pardoned by the blood of Christ, attain from God, that which is promised to those, who believe in the gospel, eternal life.

And that which Christ subjoins, "*But I say unto you, I will not drink*," &c., I do not understand ; nor does that satisfy me which some understand Christ to mean, by what He said, that He would not drink wine until after His death and resurrection, so that He should call the time after His resurrection, "*the kingdom of My Father*," therefore, because I do not find Holy Scripture to employ this mode of expression, as also because I do not understand how that wine, which Christ drank after His resurrection, should be new, I say that this apprehension does not satisfy me, and I take pleasure in stating, that as I do not understand these words, so neither do I understand those at the close of chapter xvi., couched in almost the same terms. By that, "*And when they had sung a hymn*," it indeed appears that at the end of their meal, Christ with His disciples were accustomed to have a psalm or hymn in which they praised God.

XXVI. 31-35.—Then said Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

The purpose entertained by Christ, when He prophesied to His disciples that they were about to be scandalised on the night of His apprehension, was, as I understand, precisely that which was realised; for they promised Him that they would not be scandalised, and that they would die with Him were it needed, rather than deny Him; whilst they were scandalised, and they did desert Him, which was virtually a denial of Him; they all, but principally Peter, who, as he had been more bold to promise, was more active in denying Him, doing so, once, twice, and thrice—they all learned their great frailty, their little stability, and their less constancy; for having resolved to die rather than to deny Christ, within a very short time, some deserting Him fled, whilst another denied Him thrice; whence it came to pass that he repented, and wept bitterly, as he considered his inconstancy, his weakness, and his want of stability. And he began thenceforth to think but little of himself, and to trust but little to himself, as he manifested, when Christ asked him: “Peter, lovest thou Me?” he was too dispirited to reply: “Yes, Lord; but, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee.”

St. Peter knew well that he loved Christ, but, taught by

experience in the denial, he dared not affirm that he loved. I hold it to be certain that every one of the other disciples came to this same knowledge, though that of St. Peter was greater, because his boldness had been greater, he, having been more bold in promising that, in relation to himself, which he did not know that he should be able to fulfil.

Where it is to be understood, that in proportion to the greatness of the error into which man falls, through weakness and infirmity, so much the greater is the humility to which he attains by the knowledge of his weakness and infirmity ; and where also, we learn, as we have frequently stated, to think rather badly than well of ourselves as men, not to promise, nor to resolve upon that which is not in our power to fulfil ; let us desire the good that is proposed to us, and let us abhor the evil ; and let us pray to God that He give us what we desire, and that He preserve us from that which we abhor, and thus we shall not fall into the trouble into which St. Peter fell, and into which the disciples fell.

In whom I understand the scandal to have been both inward and outward ; outward, in that stumbling bodily at Christ's arrest, one went one way and another another ; and inward, in that mentally stumbling at the same arrest they began to doubt of that in which they previously believed, hesitating as to whether Christ were, or were not, the Messiah.

What scandal is, I have stated in a Consideration [lxxvi.] Christ, in quoting those words of Zechariah xiii. 7, "*I will smite the Shepherd*," &c., meant, that in His arrest that prophecy of Zachariah would come to be fulfilled, where God speaks to the sword of His justice, which He rigorously laid upon Christ, for being, as He was, clad in our sins ; the Jews and Gentiles being His own sword, He says, "*Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts : smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered*," &c. ; it is unimportant that the prophet says "*smite*" where the evangelist

says "*I will smite*," for what God's sword does, God Himself does.

XXVI. 36-46.—Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold he is at hand that doth betray me.

I speak the truth, when I say, that I am so frail, that I scarcely dare to place myself with Christ in the garden

to consider the agony, the sadness, and the anguish, which He there felt; so small do I feel myself to be; whilst the agony and emotion, which Christ there inwardly witnessed, present themselves to me as huge, so great are they. And I feel certain that were God so fully to open my eyes that I might well consider what Christ felt in that garden, reflecting that He suffered not for Himself, but for me, and that He felt not His offences, but mine, not only should I be assured of what the gospel affirms in relation to remission of sins, and reconciliation with God, but my flesh would remain so dead by the consideration of what Christ's felt there, that nothing would thenceforth live in mine that could have the savour of sin. But I understand that God does not do this with us, because our possible and mortal flesh is not an object capable of such happiness; and thus I understand that God goes on to moderate the knowledge in His elect of what Christ suffered, with which He proceeds to assure them gradually as to remission and reconciliation; and according to the manner in which He proceeds to assure them, does He proceed to mortify them; assurance being that which does mortify them.

As to that wherein I understand that Christ's agony peculiarly consisted, what it was that so horrified Him, grieved Him, saddened Him and afflicted Him, I remit myself to what I have stated in a Consideration [lxxxii.], which to my mind is of the greatest efficacy to assure any one as to the remission of his sins past and future, and to mortify him, and to slay in him all his desires to sin. Here I will say this: that the fear which Christ experienced, was not so much on account of the death which He saw to be near at hand, as on account of the shame, which the knowing Himself to be inculpated for every one of our sins, caused Him; and because that He saw the rigour with which God punished Him for them all. I understand that this consideration kept Him depressed and terrified so as to cause Him to sweat drops

of blood; in fact, man's tongue is incapable of expressing the thousandth part of what Christ suffered; nor is his understanding capable of comprehending it: I pray to God to make me feel it; making me capable of such an experience.

The reason why Christ would not take all His disciples, and make them witnesses of what He felt in the garden, is beyond me; nor do I either understand the reason why He did not take them all to witness His glory on Mount Tabor. By that: "*He fell on His face*," &c., it is a most devout consideration to say, that Christ, as though ashamed of the sins which He had taken on Himself, and which He recognised in Himself, finding Himself inculpated by them, as though He had committed them all, Christ was too depressed to raise His face to heaven, He bowed it to the earth.

In Christ's prayer, we learn how we should pray, when we shall feel and find ourselves in similar circumstances of sadness and anguish; ever remitting ourselves to the will of God, distrusting our own. "*This cup*," is equivalent to this death, this anxiety, and this anguish. Christ in saying, "*If it be possible*," meant, as I think: if it can be, Lord, that this Thy divine will to reconcile Thyself to men can be carried out by any other agency than Mine, deliver Me from it; whilst, if it be impossible, let Thy will, O My Father, be done; I would not that this work of Thy most holy will should, for My sake, be obstructed.

From that which Christ says in His second prayer: "*Thy will be done*," it is matter for reflection that Christ adopted for Himself the counsel which He gave His disciples, when He told them for what they should pray. That: "*Watch and pray, that ye enter not*," &c., belongs, as I understand, to all times; I mean to say that it is a general counsel given by Christ, from which we learn that we shall resist temptation by vigilance and prayer; *to watch*, is for a man to be upon his guard, never being heedless; for the heedless are they, who are conquered by

temptations. As to that which Christ adds, "*The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak,*" it is possible to understand it as spoken of Himself, meaning: although, in this transaction, you see My flesh is frail and infirm, I affirm that My spirit is strong and elevated to go through all that it shall please God for it to go through: whilst it is possible that it may be understood of His disciples, meaning: I tell you to watch and to pray against temptation, because I know, that although you are prepared, as to your minds, not to be offended, still your flesh is frail and infirm; and it might come to pass, that the flesh being vanquished, you might fall in temptation. I should not know which of these views to accept as the better.

In the comings and goings to and fro which Christ made from His disciples to prayer, and from prayer to His disciples, in waking them up, in admonishing them, and in rebuking them, I consider the perturbation which Christ experienced through sadness and anguish, which is even more expressed by those words, "*Sleep on now and take your rest,*" which seem to be spoken in irony. That: "*Into the hands of sinners,*" has force.

He who shall desire to meditate more profoundly upon this transaction in the garden, let him put himself in Christ's place, and let him go on especially to meditate as to what his feelings would be, were he to find himself in a similar position to this in which Christ found Himself; finding Himself, on the one hand, most innocent and free from all sin; whilst, on the other, laden with many sins, not His own, but of others; again, finding Himself, on the one hand, deprived and stripped of all human favour; whilst, on the other, surrendered up by God to tribulation, and finding Himself near to a most cruel and ignominious death; and that so much the more ignominious, for that they who put Him to death pretended to render God service, and stated that they put Him to death as a wicked man, the enemy of God.

The more that I set myself to think what I should feel in such a position, I find my condition would be such that I certainly think that I should die then and there ; and thus I believe that it was God's work, that Christ did not die of anguish in the garden at having to go through what He underwent. I pray God to induce in me such mortification, that it may be as sweet and grateful to contemplate suffering for Christ, that which I know Christ suffered for me ; so sweet and grateful is the consideration of what Christ has suffered for me, knowing that from His suffering my joy results in part in the present life, whilst it will do so entirely and fully in the life eternal.

I have stated what I have felt upon this passage of the garden ; and let him, who shall desire to advance still further, place himself by Christ's side in the garden, and let him pray to God, with much earnestness, to do him the grace to open the eyes of his mind that he may well see what Christ there felt, and I am sure that he will think but little of what I have written, even though I combine the Consideration [lxxxii.] with it, but nevertheless and notwithstanding, let him persevere, remaining in the garden ; and let him not weary in prayer, but let him pray, with great confidence in God, that He will give him what he supplicates of Him, founding his confidence upon that divine promise in Matt. vii. 7, "*Ask and it shall be given you.*"

XXVI. 47-56.—And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he : hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master ; and kissed him. And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come ? Then came they, and

laid hands on Jesus, and took him. And behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

In Christ's arrest Judas assisted the Jews to show them where Christ was, and to point Him out from amongst others to them, who went forth to lay hands on Him, but who peradventure did not personally know Him.

Here two things present themselves to me that are fully worthy of consideration. The *one*, that Christ was betrayed by His own disciple; and by this I learn how little I can confide in the best of men of the world who are without Christian spirit. And the *other*, that they, who sent to apprehend Christ, were the heads of the Jewish religion, not in the eyes of God but of men; and here I learn how little I can confide in those, who are the heads of the Christian religion, being such in the eyes of men, if they are not so in the eyes of God; and I recognise the error of those, who depend upon man and confide in man; as for me, I adopt that in Psalm lxxiii. 28, "*It is good for me to adhere to God,*" *mihi autem adhaerere Deo, bonum est.*

In those words of Christ, "*Friend, wherefore art thou come?*" two things are to be considered: the *one*, Christ's meekness that calls His greatest enemy friend; and the *other*, that when He asks him why he came, it was a reminder of the evil which he wrought, that he should reflect that he came to deliver up Him, who is life itself, to death. It is well to consider St. Peter's courage, evinced by his daring to defend his Master with arms, amongst so many enemies.

Christ's words, "*For all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword,*" are simply to be understood as meaning, that they, who walk about armed, incur the peril of dying by arms, as though Christ had said: it is not My wish that thou shouldest defend Me, nor thyself either, with arms; for I do not wish to die by arms, nor do I wish that thou shouldest die so; for I wish to die, and I wish that thou shouldest die, another kind of death. Effectively Christ wills that they, who are His, follow Him; that they do like Him, and that they go whither He went. Christ adding, "*Thinkest thou that I cannot now,*" &c., desired to give St. Peter's mind confidence, assuring him, that although apparently He died by the will of those who led Him away to death, He did not die otherwise than by His own will, which was conformed to the will of God; who not only willed that Christ should die for our sins according to what He had promised, but willed that those things, which had been prophesied, should concur in His death, in order that the agreement between that which had been prophesied and its execution might be a confirmation of the faith of those, who are inspired to believe.

The Scriptures, which I at this time find most in accordance with what I see executed in Christ's death, are Psalm xxii., which begins, "*My God, my God,*" &c., and Psalm lxix., which begins, "*Save me, O God,*" &c., and the liii. chapter of Isaiah. Christ, in saying, "*As against a thief,*" &c., purposed to show them the malice and wickedness with which they came. In the Greek there is but

one and the same word which is rendered in the [Spanish] translation *knife* and *swords*, which I have translated differently, because it appeared to me to be an improper thing to give a sword to St. Peter, whilst the Greek word means both one and the other. From St. John, it appears that it was St. Peter who cut off the ear. That word "ave," hail, I have rendered in Latin, for I have no Spanish word wherewith to express the signification of the Greek, which is used in salutation both in writing and in speaking. I have done the same in the "ave" of chapter xxvii. and in the "avete" of chapter xxviii.

XXVI. 57-68. And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end. Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; but found none; yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, and said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? And Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee, by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent

his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy ; what further need have we of witnesses ? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye ? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him ; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee ?

Where St. Matthew states that [the whole body of the hierarchy] the chief priests and elders, and all the council sought false witness against Jesus, that they therewith might condemn Jesus to death, but found none ; I understand it thus : that they sought testimony, which, although untrue, should be plausible, but that they found nothing that could serve their purpose.

Where we ought to consider the purity and innocence of Christ's life, since, not even with falsehood, could it be inculpated with anything bad, done by Him, so as to render it probable that blame attached to Him ; and when I recollect, that to comprehend the perfection in which I am comprehended, I have to bring myself to live as purely and as innocently, whilst I see myself so far from that, that I myself am ashamed of myself ; it occurring to me how far I am from that degree of perfection, which, as a Christian, I strive to attain, I pray God that He keep me near Him.

The falsehood of these witnesses, who stated, "*This fellow said, I am able*," &c., does not consist in its being untrue that Christ had uttered these words, because it appears that He spoke them ; but it does consist, in that He did not speak them in the sense in which the witnesses interpreted them : they interpreted them of the temple of stone, whilst Christ had spoken them of the temple of His body, as appears in St. John, chapter ii.

Christ, conjured by the living God, was constrained to

reply; but He moderated His answer, neither affirming nor denying, as He had done with Judas at the supper. When Christ added, "*But I say unto you, hereafter shall ye see,*" &c., it appears that what He said meant, if it scandalise you to see Me in this vile and despised state, I tell you, that ere long you shall see Me in a glorious and triumphant state, occupying the highest rank near to God, and [coming] on the clouds of heaven. Where Christ alluded to His second coming to judgment; and it is of no importance, that it appears from His words, that He meant that He was about to come very shortly, for although, according to human judgment, it appears that this has not been realised, since He has not as yet come; according to divine judgment it is so, for that a thousand years to God present a term no longer to Him than was yesterday to us.

Had Christ, as man, known of His coming to judgment by the spirit of man, speaking as a man, He would have said, that after the lapse of ages they would see the Son of man at the right hand of power, &c., but knowing it as the Son of God, as the Word of God, with the Divine Spirit, He spoke as God, saying, not long hence, or shortly, "*you shall see.*" "*At the right hand of power,*" is equivalent to, at the mighty right hand; He means, of God. The Jewish high priest rending or tearing his robes was according to Jewish usage, and was intended to aggravate what Christ had said, the proper office of a passionate and blind Jewish prelate. Those words, "*Prophecy unto us, thou Christ,*" are full of scorn.

XXVI. 69-75.—Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus the Galilean. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus the

Nazarene. And again he denied with an oath, I know not the man. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them ; for thy speech bewrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

Learning through all Christ's history that St. Peter was very lively and very proud, taking the lead in everything, and frequently without consideration ; as he did, when he rebuked Christ, because He spoke of His death ; and as he did, when he said that he should not be offended, when Christ had told him that he would be offended ; and as he did, when he cut off another man's ear ; I understand that Christ purposed (as I have before stated), to mortify vivacity in St. Peter, by allowing him to fall into temptation, in order that he might learn to know himself, and might be humbled ; as, indeed, he did learn to know himself and was humbled.

And here, I understand the reason, why God often allows those, who are His, to fall into temptations ; it is because the human mind is exceedingly vain and arrogant ; and, therefore, needs to be let down, beaten down, and humbled.

Here likewise, I learn, that it concerns the Christian to desire, as one might say, not to deny Christ for anything upon earth ; and not to presume, concerning himself, that he will be self-sufficient not to deny Him ; but, let him ask God to give him strength to enable him to resist the temptations, by which he will be solicited to deny Him.

Here also, I understand the reason why, to Christians, who propose and resolve upon many things, that are holy

and good, they frequently issue quite contrary to what they determined ; it is, because their resolution is taken without consideration of their own personal impotence, just as I have written in a Consideration [vii.]

Forasmuch as St. Peter was not recognised by his dress, but by his speech, we learn that Christ's disciples went about, undistinguished by their dress, from other men.

As to St. Peter's weeping, I understand that he wept from regret, when he saw himself fallen into that offence, in relation to which he had resolved and affirmed, that he would not fall ; and I understand that they imitate St. Peter, in weeping, when they weep, disgusted at their deviation from Christian obligation, from Christian decorum ; weeping as do they, who are annoyed and vexed with themselves ; discontented at having offended Him, whom they recognise themselves under obligation to serve, and whom they affectionately desire to serve.

They, who weep from fear of the evil which they may bring upon themselves by their sin or sins, pretending to be pardoned by their tears, do not imitate St. Peter. Putting this denial of St. Peter, together with what Christ has stated in chapter x., that He will deny the man, who shall deny Him ; it is readily understood, that Christ means but those, who deliberately and pertinaciously shall deny Him ; knowing Him, but being unwilling to confess Him, either with the lips or with Christian life.

St. Peter's denial proceeded from weakness and frailty ; although, in the first instance, he denied simply ; in the second he denied with an oath ; whilst in the third he denied, adding curses to the oath. Where I understand, that, if St. Peter had denied, having resolved to deny, having made up his mind to do so, taking pleasure in doing so, he would not have wept bitterly, as he did, immediately upon his repentance ; nay, he would have done what Judas did upon his repentance, as St. Matthew presently relates, setting before us, after an example of frailty,

wherewith the weak are comforted, another example of malignity, with which the malignant are made to quake.

And here I will add this: that, from St. Peter's temptation, I learn of what kind are the temptations, with which God permits His elect, being tempted, to fall; whilst from Judas' temptation, I learn of what kind are the temptations, wherewith they are tempted, who are not of the number of God's elect, although it outwardly seems that they are so, and they persuade themselves that they are so; for that these never know their error, and, if they do know it, they despair of themselves, as did Judas; whilst those, presently or very quickly, know their error, and, as soon as they know it, they grieve, knowing themselves to have fallen into that, wherein they did not wish to fall, as did St. Peter.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

XXVII. 1-10.—When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. Then Judas, who had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

I understand that Judas knew that he was condemned, and hanged himself, knowing his condemnation, by the same spirit, by which he was excited to betray Christ, and had betrayed Him; I mean that the same wicked spirit, which blinded him before he wrought the evil, so that he should not consider it, opened his eyes after the evil was done, in order that he should recognise it, and that he should know himself to be condemned on account of it, and that he should hang himself; where I understand, that although Judas knew that he did wickedly in selling Christ, because he did not know that he would on that account be damned, he did not desist from his wicked purpose; that this is a fact appears from this, that as soon as he knew himself about to be damned, he hanged himself from remorse. And I feel certain that all they, who, incited like Judas, persecute Christ in His members, persecuting Christian truth and Christian life, finally determine to do what Judas determined to do; and if effectively, they do not hang themselves, it is because their malignity is even greater than that of Judas, persevering to the end of life in exerting it, without ever confessing themselves to be malignants, as Judas confessed himself to be, which confession, although it did not help him, served to manifest Christ's innocency, since the very man, who sold Him, bore witness to it.

In the Jewish high priests and elders we have to consider a natural illustration of the peculiar condition of those, who devote themselves to a false religion, who swallow the camel and strain off the gnat, who murdered the Innocent, and then felt scrupulous as to putting the money into the treasury, which they had given to the person who had sold Him. Such things as these are constantly witnessed in those, who are like these; and all they are such as these, who devote themselves to false religion, which consists in vain ceremonies and in superstitious observances of days, of months, of times, and of years, &c., and they excite themselves on behalf

of it, because, not knowing true religion, which consists in the acceptance of Christ, and in the imitation of Christ, they are almost constrained to persecute those, who devote themselves to it; and still more those, who being devoted to it, teach it; for just as the imperfections of an ugly and ill-made thing are discovered by the brightness of the sun, so are the imperfections and hideous features of false religion discovered, by the brilliant light of true religion.

As to the prophecy which St. Matthew quotes here, it has given plenty to do, and to say, to those, who have written upon it from that time to the present; I remit myself to them. [Jeremiah is probably an interpolation; the prophecy is found in Zech. xi. 13.] What is here rendered president might have been translated governor. Where it says that he was condemned, it means that his sin deserved hell. That which is here rendered alms-box or treasury, the Greek word *κορβάρας*, which is a Jewish one, signifies the place in the temple where the money-offerings were placed; such as are the little boxes or chests, which in Castile are placed in the churches for visitors to put in their alms for the repairs of the structure of the church, which little arks we Spaniards call *cepos*. Where the text says "field," it means a tract of land. And where it says "strangers," it might have said pilgrims, foreigners, and guests. A "potter" is he, who moulds earthen vessels; his Spanish title is Ollero, his Arabic Alfaharero.

XXVII. 11-26.—And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the king of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest. And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? And he

answered him to never a word, insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly. Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. And they had then a notable prisoner called Barabbas. Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus, who is called Christ? For he knew that for envy they had delivered him. When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas. Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus, who is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person, see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

In these words eight things present themselves worthy of consideration. *First*, that the saints of the world, who questioned the propriety of putting the money that Judas flung down on the floor of the temple into its alms-box, presented themselves at the tribunal of Pilate, the Gentile, as the accusers of the Son of God. Whence I learn that it behoves me to avoid all appearance of sanctity, since such are its effects.

*Second*, that Pilate, when he asked Christ whether He were King of the Jews, really meant the Messiah, whom it was notorious that the Jews expected. And here the wickedness of the high priests and scribes is more recognisable, for they put Christ to death, of whom it was, at least, suspected that He was the Messiah.

*Third*, that just as Pilate marvelled, when he saw that Christ was silent, and that when accused He offered no defence, so do men of the world marvel when they see that God's saints, members of Christ, offer no defence when accused. And here I learn what it becomes me to do, when like Christ, under accusation; and it shames me to think how little is my mortification, and how great my vivacity, when I set myself to consider how I should act were I to find myself circumstanced as Christ here found Himself; and I pray to God that He may bring me to the same meekness and humility, that I may recognise that in myself, which I consider in Christ. And it is most apposite to state, that Christ's silence fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah l.iiii. 7, which says, that, "*He was led like a beast to the slaughter, and that like a sheep, before its shearer, is dumb, so He shall not open His mouth.*"

*Fourth*, that just as Pilate, a man of the world, was not so unjust to Christ as were the Jews, saints of the world, so neither are men of the world so injurious to members of Christ, as saints of the world. And here I learn that I ought more to avoid the company of saints of the world, than that of men of the world.

*Fifth*, that the devil acted extravagantly and inconsis-

ently towards Christ ; on the one hand, he procured His death, putting it into the heart of Judas to betray Him ; on the other hand, he impeded it by terrifying Pilate's wife with dreams, so that she should send and tell her husband not to interfere with Christ ; on account of that message Pilate seriously attempted to liberate Christ, and from fear he washed his hands, therein practising a Jewish ceremony, because he was dealing with Jews. And here I learn, that if God's mysteries are not understood by devils, as in point of fact this of Christ's death was not ; neither are they understood by Christians, whom God, through their instrumentality, mortifies by temptations and persecutions ; much less will they be understood by human prudence, however refined and polished it may be ; nay, I hold it to be certain that the more refined and polished it is, so much the more is it incapable of the things of God. And here I learn that I never should trust human prudence in divine and Christian things, never admitting its human arguments.

*Sixth, that the people are generally like those who govern them, especially so in things that pertain to religion ; and thus it does not astonish me that the Jewish people allowed themselves so easily to be persuaded by their high priests, to shout for His death, who came to give them life, whom they had just previously received with shouts of, "Hosanna to the Son of David."* And here I understand, that from what I shall see in the customs of the lower classes in their religion, I shall be able to conjecture what the upper classes are in religious matters ; in order to keep me from confiding in them, to preserve me from that which they approve, and to render their condemnation a matter of indifference to me.

*Seventh, that that actually befell the Jewish people, which they invoked upon themselves, saying, "His blood be upon us and upon our children," beginning with the destruction of Jerusalem, and descending gradually upon those, who approved of what their fathers did, in slaying*

Christ, for they pertinaciously maintain their fathers' obduracy. And here the blindness, into which the Jews had fallen at the time they uttered those words, surprises me, whilst the blindness in which the Jews of our time are, surprises me still more, whose eyes are not opened to see the light of the gospel, even by the consideration of what has come upon them by the death of Christ.

*Eighth*, that all the goodness that is founded and framed upon what is false, upon fear, as was that of Pilate's, bears its own stamp in falling to the ground ; at first Pilate endeavoured to liberate Christ, whom he called a just man, but whom he ultimately delivered up to death, after having had Him scourged, which with the Romans was a customary preliminary to execution. And here I learn what the effect is of fear, so praised as to be canonised by those who, because they do not love, do not know what love is ; they do not know what Christian faith is, for they do not possess it ; had they had it, they would have loved ; and had they loved, they would have condemned fear as that which is contrary and inimical to love.

XXVII. 27-34.—Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand : and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews ! And they spat upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him. And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name : him they

compelled to bear his cross. And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, they gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink.

I hold it to be certain, that Christ was beyond all comparison more offended by the malignity with which He was accused by the Jews than by the brutality with which He was maltreated and derided by the Gentiles; who, because Christ was accused of having made Himself a King, put Him forward in derision and mockery in regal garb, in order to treat Him afterwards worse than a servant and slave.

It is said that the robe in which they mantled Him, was a soldier's cloak; I rather think it to have been a royal robe. When they compelled Simon, the Cyrenean, to carry Christ's cross, I do not think that they purposed to relieve Christ of fatigue, but to get the more quickly to the place of crucifixion.

It is said to have been customary with the Romans to offer to those whom they were about to execute vinegar or strong wine as an anaesthetic, and hence that it was offered to Christ as such, in order that He might feel the less torment. The mixing of gall with the vinegar was an act of brutality, originating with the attendant executioners.

Here I will say this, that he, who shall consider Christ, standing amongst those soldiers, treated with such inhumanity and brutality, and shall ponder those words of Isaiah, where he says in chapter liii. 3, "*He is despised and rejected of man, a man of sorrows, and experienced in grief, from whom we hid, as it were, our faces; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not,*" will be constrained to say that Isaiah, in vision, saw Christ precisely in that plight in which the evangelist reports Him to have been. Whence

it may be gathered how profitable it is for those, who are tempted to doubt in relation to Christian truth, to compare with simplicity and humility the prophecies of Christ's passion and death with the narratives written by the evangelists.

XXVII. 35-44.—And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. And sitting down they watched him there; and set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left. And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others, himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also, who were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

There are three things in these words whereon to comment.

*First*, the division made of Christ's clothes by the soldiers amongst themselves, whereby that was fulfilled in Him, which is written in Psalm xxii., and as to the exposition of those words, I remit myself to the commentary

I have written upon that passage; whence it may be inferred that, although Christ's dress was not costly, still it was not so vile, as not to be worth something, since the soldiers distributed them amongst themselves, by casting lots.

*Second*, that it was brought about by God that Pilate should place over Christ, the title, King of the Jews, not so much to the confusion of the Jews, who delivered their King up to death, as to the glory of true Christians; for that, when they saw Christ crucified, and read the title on the cross, they prided themselves upon their having recognised Him as King, whom the Jews condemned and put to death as an ungodly person; He, indeed, being their King.

*Third*, that the insulting acts, wherewith Christ was mocked, and the words wherewith He was insulted, by those who passed by that way (for it appears that the cross was erected near a highway), and by the heads of the Jewish synagogue, and by the thieves themselves, who were crucified with Him, it appears that these were so many other temptations, wherewith Christ was tempted, not only to resent His finding Himself in that condition, but to deviate from the will of God, by coming down from the cross. I am led to think thus, by considering that Christ could, had He willed it, have come down from the cross, and have made men believe in Him, and accept Him for what He was; that He could have destroyed the temple, and reconstructed it in three days, just in the manner in which they understood it; and that He could have shown that He was the Son of God, and that He was mighty to save Himself, and to deliver Himself from death, and that He was the King of Israel. And I understand that the temptation which Christ most felt was that: "*He trusted in God, let Him deliver Him, if He like Him*," or if He love Him; for this affected the honour of God, inasmuch as it appeared that He did not deliver Christ, who had trusted in Him; and it affected Christ's piety,

inasmuch as it appeared that God did not love Him, since He did not deliver Him.

I understand this thus, partly by what I read in David, who was ever solicitous that it should not be said that he had faltered in his confidence in God, or that God did not love him, or hold him in consideration; as I have particularly shown in my exposition of Psalm iii.; and partly by what I feel myself, that there is nothing that afflicts or torments me more, than thoughts which occasionally annoy me, by suggesting to me doubts as to this confidence and this love; and than the calumnies of the saints of the world, wherewith they calumniate my Christian faith, and my Christian life; and I hold it to be certain, that this is the experience of all, who have Christian faith, and devote themselves to live Christianly; who, if they consider, when they find themselves in a similar position to that, in which Christ found Himself, from which they might liberate themselves, but by deviating from that which they know to be the will of God; this is what they would feel when similar expressions should be addressed to them, which were addressed to Christ; and how frequently would they be moved to come down from the cross; they will the better feel what Christ felt when hanging on the cross, and they will know whether Isaiah was right, when, in chapter liii. 10, he praised Christ for this: "*That the pleasure of the Lord had prospered in His hand,*" that God's purpose was realised in that which He willed should be accomplished in Christ and by Christ; He ever standing firm and constant in the will of God, without ever in any way deviating from it; and knowing it, they will ask God to give them firmness and constancy, that His divine will may likewise be prospered in their hand.

Considering the strength of the temptations with which Christ was tempted by men, at the time of His death, I firmly believe in the demoniacal temptations with which, it is said, that Christians are visited, when just about to die; and I understand that, when those ungodly men

spoke those words, which they addressed to Christ, it was not they who spake them, but it was the diabolic spirit that spoke by them, doing in them as his children, that which the Spirit of our divine and heavenly Father works in us: this inspires us to glorify God and Christ, whilst that inspired them to blaspheme God and Christ, as it ever inspires them, who are such as were they.

Here it is readily seen that, when the evangelist says, "*That it might be fulfilled*," &c., that it is not to be understood that the design was to fulfil that prophecy, but that, by that act, the prophecy was fulfilled; it was not because it had been prophesied, but it was prophesied, because it had come to pass. In saying, "*His accusation written*," he means the reason why He died; this is better seen in St. John.

The wagging of their heads was a Jewish usage, nay, David describes it, in Psalm xxii., as though he had witnessed it with his bodily eyes. To that which might here be falsely objected, as the Jews actually do falsely object, that it was not customary in Israel to crucify men, in the manner in which we read that Christ was crucified, they must be answered, that it is indeed true of the period prior to Israel's subjection to the Roman empire, under which subjection however, this, with many other things, was changed.

XXVII. 45-50.—Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama, sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elijah. And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and

gave him to drink. The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him. Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

Whether the evangelist by saying, "*over all the earth*" means all over the world, I know not; this I do know that the Jews when they spoke of the land of Israel, called it all the earth. And possibly it would not be improper to say that the darkness was not such as is that of night, but that it was such, that they, who had eyesight, knew thereby that the sun, which gives us light, evinced feeling for the sufferings experienced by the Sun of Righteousness, Jesus Christ our Lord, who gives light to our souls; nay it seems that we are constrained to understand it thus; because, if the darkness of those three hours had been that of night, neither those scoffing spectators would have been able to see Him, and still less would the women, who, from a distance, were looking upon what transpired; but on this I remit myself to those who know more and understand it.

Those words of Christ, "*Eli, Eli, lama, sabachthani?*" or *azabtani*, as it is in Hebrew, are, word for word, the opening words of Psalm xxii, which conforms so much with what Christ suffered in His death.

That, "*Why hast Thou forsaken Me?*" is to be regarded as the voice of the flesh, which, seeing itself in that *plight*, felt itself forsaken of God, and delivered up to tribulation; as was also that a voice from the flesh of Christ, when He said in the garden, "*Let this cup pass from Me.*" Christ's flesh was like my flesh, so far as to its being *passible* and *mortal*; although, as to its being subject to sin, it was unlike mine; and for this reason, as *passible flesh*, it felt suffering, nay it was necessary that Christ should manifest and feel all this weakness, in order that I might be certain that God executed the *rigour* of His justice, which should have been executed upon my flesh, upon a flesh as *passible* as

*my own*, and that He should thus confirm me in the faith of the gospel, that I should believe that things actually are, as they are intimated to me in the gospel, which intimation is based upon Christ's suffering; whilst the foundation or basis is so much the firmer, in proportion as the suffering was more rigorous: whilst it was not possible for Him in any way to manifest His rigour to such an extent, as in showing us that Christ, when He suffered, felt Himself in the flesh to be forsaken of God.

And those Christians, who have at one time felt the presence of God and the favour of God in their spirits, and have seen themselves at another time persecuted by men of the world, and tempted by the devils of hell; whilst again at another, deprived of the feeling of God's presence and of God's favour, they will be able to bear some testimony as to what Christ intensely felt at the time that He uttered these words; and these same persons will understand, that just as they, under similar circumstances, said that God had forsaken them, they did not say so in their hearts, but with their lips; for in their souls they did not feel so; so Christ, when He said, "*Why hast Thou forsaken Me?*" did not say so with the heart, because heart felt, but with the lips, on account of what the flesh felt.

They, who said, "*This fellow calls upon Elijah*," indeed appear not to have been Jews but Gentiles, for if they had been Jews, they would have understood His tongue, nay they would have known the words of the Psalm. St. Matthew does not record what Christ exclaimed with a loud voice when He expired, or breathed out His Spirit, neither does he record the other words which Christ spoke, being on the cross, which are written by the other evangelists, of which, if God will, we shall speak in their proper place.

Where he says, "*Jesus cried with a loud voice*," and where he says, that "*Jesus loudly shouted*," I have employed Castilian modes of expression for Grecian. In that

*"Straightway one of them ran,"* is not to be understood that this man ran to do something from what he heard Christ say, but that he moved spontaneously to do that obeying some personal impulse.

XXVII. 51-54.—And behold the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom ; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent ; and the graves were opened ; and many bodies of the saints which slept, arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

Christ having persevered in obedience to God unto death, without having allowed Himself to be overcome so as to deviate from it, either by the cruelty with which He was treated, or by the insults which were hurled at Him, or by the temptations of men, who, it would seem, by the words which they addressed to Him, tempted Him, as we have seen, to come down from the cross, God illustrated His death with such miraculous demonstrations as sufficed to convince the minds of the Gentiles, who were present, so that they confessed Him to be the Son of God ; thus from the moment that Christ expired on the cross, His death became more effective than His life had been ; nay, it is a fact that He wrought this in dying ; He was acknowledged to be the Son of God by those who had been set as a guard over Him, to watch Him as an enemy of God, much more than if He had come down from the cross, when the Jews tempted Him by telling Him that He should come down. And what God wrought with Christ, I understand that He always works with

them who are members of Christ, in that He renders them more illustrious by their victories over temptations, than they would have been, even then, when they should have attained all that happiness which had been proposed to them when they were tempted, in the event of their having allowed themselves to be overcome by temptations.

In the scission, or rent of the veil of the temple, which was before "the holy of holies," the *sancta sanctorum*, it appears that the abrogation of the law was intimated, which I understand to have remained in force until Christ expired. In saying, "*And many bodies of the saints*," &c., he means, that at Christ's shout in death many bodies of the saints, who were in their sepulchres, came to life again, but that they did not come forth from them until Christ had risen, in order that, as St. Paul states in Col. i. 18, "*Christ should be the first born from the dead*." In this case of these dead, who came to life again, I have some doubts from which I desire to be free, and, trusting that God, when He shall please, will free me from them, I do not record them here, to give others the occasion of adopting them. That, "*who slept*," is a scriptural mode of expression, which calls the death of those who die, knowing God to be their God, sleep, alluding, as I believe, to the resurrection.

XXVII. 55-61. — And many women were there, beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him: Among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children. When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathæa, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple. He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body

to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed. And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

I understand that St. Matthew introduces these holy women into his narrative, in order to praise their constancy and perseverance, in the spiritual love with which they loved Christ; for they not only remained on the scene until they had witnessed Christ's death and burial, but they persevered in remaining upon some spot or other, whence they might be able to see the tomb or sepulchre, where Christ's body was laid. They loved Him living, dying they loved Him, they loved Him being dead, and they loved Him when buried; they would not have been capable of love so great, and so persevering, neither would it have been so firm or so constant, had it been merely their own; but the love was thus firm and constant, because it was divine; for God had inspired them with it, and it was He who conserved and maintained it in them, for they did not love themselves in Christ, but they loved God in Christ.

I understand that the evangelist narrates the incident of Joseph, in order to show that there was faith and love in that man too, and likewise because it was of importance, in connection with Christ's resurrection, that it should be known where and how He was buried. Possibly Isaiah's words, where he says in liii. 9, "*He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death; because He had done no violence, neither had there been deceit in His mouth.*" harmonise in this Christ's interment; if understood as meaning that Christ's tomb was committed to the care of the wicked, as we shall shortly see, and that his sepulchre

was that, which that rich man had constructed as his family vault ; magnifying Christ, that He never having done or said anything that impugned His rectitude, was treated as a man, who was pure, even by those, who were bad and perverse.

XXVII. 62-66.— Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead : so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch : go your way, make it as sure as you can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

This is a most extraordinary thing, that the more that human prudence strives and devises to suppress and to shroud the glory of Christ, so much the more is it thereby illustrated ; just so was Christ's resurrection signalised by the malevolent industry of these saints of the world ; on the other hand I understand that so much the more as unaided human prudence endeavours to illustrate the glory of Christ, so much the more is it obscured by the mode employed to illustrate it. Of this numerous instances might be given, which I remit to the spiritual consideration of those, in whom the glory of Christ is illustrated by the Holy Spirit, which, through Christ Himself, is communicated to them.

“ *After three days,*” is here tantamount to saying, on the third day. By that : “ *Sealing the stone and setting a watch,*”

I understand the evangelist to set forth, what the guard was, that the Jews placed upon the sepulchre, to wit, by sealing the stone which was at the mouth of the sepulchre, and by placing men on guard, who should not leave the spot until the three days had elapsed.

The Christian, who, when under persecution, even by those, who call themselves Christians, and then under the imputation of not being a Christian, should well consider the epithet, which the heads of the Jewish synagogue applied to Christ, "*that deceiver*," and I feel assured that he will not be dismayed by persecution, nay he will be comforted and will gain strength, by seeing that he is treated precisely as the Son of God was treated: whilst the Christian's glory is greater or less, according as he is more or less like to Christ, who not only died for us, but has left us His life and His death, as a pattern of perfection, that we should follow His footsteps (1 Peter ii. 21).

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

XXVIII. 1-10.—Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

St. Matthew, having narrated the incidents connected with Christ's death and burial, upon which our justification and mortification depend, for that we, who accept the grace of the gospel, being incorporated into Christ, enjoy the results attained by the justice executed upon Christ, because we really and effectively died and were buried with Christ, even as I have specially treated in my reply to a question [xxv.], proceeds to give the history of the resurrection of Christ, upon which depends our vivification in the present life, and our resurrection in the life eternal; for our experience will correspond with His.

Where it behoves every Christian to consider, that just as he increased Christ's agony in His passion by his acts of disobedience to God as I have stated in a Consideration [lxxxii.], so likewise has he increased Christ's joy in His resurrection, by his acts of obedience; for I understand that as Christ, when dying, had all our acts of disobedience present to His mind, so likewise Christ, when rising from the dead, had all our acts of obedience present to His mind; in order that, just as the former had increased His agony, so the latter should increase His joy.

He, who shall desire to examine himself, in order to see whether he has accepted the grace of the gospel, under the impulse of flesh and blood, or under the impulse of the Holy Spirit, by revelation of the eternal Father, as did St. Peter, let him see well to it, whether the death, and whether the resurrection of Christ, have wrought their effects upon him, or have begun to work them, by mortifying him and by vivifying him, setting him to live in the present life like one dead and risen again; for they, who are not set to this, do not feel the benefit of Christ, they neither recognise themselves, nor do they feel themselves, to be dead with Christ, nor risen again with Christ. Here it is to the purpose to state that my Consideration [lxxxiii.] is upon Christ's resurrection.

To understand that, "*Now after the Sabbath, and towards dawn of the first day of the week,*" it suffices to know that as we [Spaniards] say Monday, the second, Tuesday, the third, &c., the Jews said Sunday, the second, Monday, the third, &c., for they made the first day of the week a working day: with this, it is understood that these holy women went to the sepulchre at dawn of Sunday morning, and that St. Matthew calls the whole of Saturday night, the period beginning from the close of the Sabbath, conformably with that in Genesis i. 5, "*And the evening and the morning were the first day.*"

From the other evangelists, it is to be understood, that these holy women came to anoint Christ's body; by which act, although they showed their affection, they also showed how small was their faith, since they thought they should find Him in the tomb; whilst He had promised that He would rise again on the third day. And hence may be gathered what I am in the habit of saying, that Christians are frequently moved by one intention of their own, and by another, to which they are moved by the Holy Spirit. The intention, by which these holy women were moved, was to anoint Christ; whilst the Holy Spirit's impulse, was with the intention that they should see Christ risen from the dead. And here I understand it to be a good token when a man is moved by a good intention, but it issues in another, a better, I mean that it is a token that that better is from the Holy Spirit.

As to that, "*There was a great earthquake,*" I am reminded of what I stated in my exposition of the psalms; that God was wont, upon such occasions as the death and resurrection of Christ, to move the earth by earthquakes, to certify us, that God Himself, as one might say, consents sympathisingly in Christ's death, and raises Christ up; He it is, who created all things, rules them, and governs them, as absolute Lord over them all; in order that, certified of this, we, who feel ourselves to be incor-

porated into Christ, by acceptance of the grace of the gospel, may rest secure in Christ's promises; founding our security upon the providence and omnipotence of God; and it is truly the greatest satisfaction and inward glory of the true Christian, to know for certain, that he is favoured by, beloved of, and endeared to Him, who holds all creatures in His hand, by whom He is obeyed in all and everything; this consideration therefore imparts life to me.

As to the angel coming down from heaven, and showing himself resplendent and bright in his person and in his garments, I remit myself to what they say, who speak, having some experience, for I have none, and thus can only report what others say. That, "*And the angel answered and said,*" &c.; this is a mode of speaking peculiar to Holy Scripture, which appears to mean, that it is not an answer to a question made and put, but that it is so, to what one might have desired to ask, or should have asked.

Here it has to be taken into consideration, that the guard, who watched the sepulchre, were men, whilst they who came to see the sepulchre were women; now these were firm and constant, whilst the men feared, trembled, and became as dead men. God's works ever produce these same effects, they terrify and alarm men of the world to such an extent as to make them lose all self-control; whilst they comfort and cheer the children of God, even unto their transformation into God. That, "*Behold He goeth before you into Galilee,*" &c., has to be combined with what Christ promised His disciples when the supper was over, saying, "*But after that I shall have risen again, I shall go before you into Galilee.*"

As to the reasons why Christ was pleased to allow Himself to be seen by His disciples in Galilee, and not in Jerusalem, as He allowed Himself to be seen by the holy women, I remit myself to what others say, since I dare not speak upon conjecture of things, in relation to which

I cannot speak without some sort of evidence or experience. In those words of the angel, "*Jesus, the crucified,*" it is very worthy of consideration, that that which is ignominious in the eyes of the world, and of the children of Adam, who follow the judgment of human prudence, is glorious in the eyes of God, and of the children of God, who follow the judgment of the Holy Spirit; and for that reason the angel of God, in speaking to the holy women, who were the daughters of God, calls Christ, "*Jesus, the crucified,*" giving Him the most honourable and glorious title that he could give Him as man, for that Christ has conquered, not by resurrection, but by death.

St. Paul as a child of God felt this, and therefore desired not to glory, save in the cross of Christ (Gal. vi. 14), neither would he know [anything among the Corinthians] save Christ crucified (1 Cor. ii. 2), and they likewise feel thus, who, having the spirit that St. Paul had, are children of God, whilst some feel it more, and others feel it less, accordingly as Christian faith and Christian spirit more or less animate them. All other men hold the cross to be an ignominious title, even when they praise and adore the cross of Christ, because human prudence adjudges it, and holds it, to be ignominious.

Where I understand that they hold the cross of Christ to be honourable and glorious, who have come to an inflexible determination both as to the world and to themselves; of such sort, that they as men would not be ashamed of, nor would they resent, it, were they obliged to go through that which Christ went through; and if they are not wholly and perfectly brought to this, they know that they ought to be so; they desire to bring themselves to it, and they strive to attain it; seeking to mortify all that they derive from Adam, their purpose being, so to work upon themselves, that the cross of Christ may be to them glorious and grateful, in suffering for the glory of Christ what Christ suffered for our glory; desiring to be very like Christ in the state of passibility and mortality, in order that they

may be very like Christ in the state of resurrection and of glorification.

They who are not brought to this, or devoted to this, desiring it and striving after it, however much they may praise, and that they may adore the cross of Christ with outward tokens and demonstrations; it is clear that they are not the children of God, for holding the cross of Christ to be ignominious, not wishing to see it laid in any way upon them, they testify of themselves that they do not follow the judgment of the Holy Spirit, which the children of God do follow, but that of human prudence, which the children of Adam follow; these are they, who adore the cross of Christ with the body, and praise it with the lips, whilst they abhor in their hearts and mentally spit upon this same cross of Christ, because they love the glory of men more than the glory of God and of Christ. By that, "*With fear and with great joy,*" the evangelist well expresses the effect that such an incident produces even on men. I have explained what that word, "*avete,*" hail, signifies in the exposition of the xxvi. chapter.

XXVIII. 11-15.—Now when they were going, behold some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

When it is taken into consideration, that from the Jewish chief priests having placed their guards about Christ's tomb

and that from their having bribed the guards to deny that which was true, and to affirm that which was false, it came to pass that the glory of Christ's resurrection was more illustrated, and that the wickedness and perversity of those, who had put Him to death, became more notorious ; it seems right to me to repeat here, what I have stated at the close of the preceding chapter ; that in the very way that human prudence endeavours to detract from, and to obscure the glory and dignity of Christ, in order to illustrate and magnify its own ignominy and its own unworthiness, the glory and dignity of Christ is magnified and illustrated, whilst the ignominy and unworthiness of human prudence is aggravated and rendered obscure, as we see happened to these Jewish chief priests ; and as, we know, happened to those, who persecuted and killed them, who confessed Christ in the time of the martyrs, and which, as it appears, always has happened and does happen to them, who have endeavoured and do endeavour to bring about that, which the chief priests of the Jews endeavoured to accomplish.

Whence, taking into consideration that the same experience occurs to human prudence in connection with Christ, and with them, who are His members, that occurred to God Himself, before Christ's incarnation, as appears in the instance of Pharaoh, in that of Sennacherib, and in that of Nebuchadnezzar, I see a most striking testimony to the divinity of Christ.

Having taken this into consideration, and having, on the other hand, considered that human prudence, whenever it endeavours and aims to illustrate, and to magnify the name of God and of Christ, unaided by the Holy Spirit, disparages and obscures them, by that very way in which it aims and endeavours to magnify them, and to illustrate them, I am led to understand this, that Christians ought to regret, when they see men of the world endeavour to illustrate and to magnify the glory of Christ ; holding it to be certain that it will issue just contrarily ; whilst they

ought to rejoice, when they see that these very men endeavour to disparage, and to obscure the glory of Christ, knowing assuredly, that it will result wholly otherwise. And I even understand that these same Christians ought always to be grieved, when they shall recognise that men of the world seek to illustrate and to magnify them ; whilst they ought always to rejoice, when they shall see those very men seek to oppress and to humble them ; holding it to be certain that it will issue wholly otherwise ; so that to grieve at the acts of maltreatment inflicted upon them by men, and to rejoice at being kindly dealt with by them, they may hold to be a carnal affection ; whilst to be grieved at kindly treatment, and to rejoice over maltreatment, they may hold to be an affection of the Spirit ; just as the apostles rejoiced, when the Jews, seeking to suppress the glory of Christ, scourged them, and commanded them not to preach Christ.

I likewise understand that it concerns every one to be upon his guard, when he shall feel himself moved, to magnify and to illustrate the glory of Christ, knowing assuredly that, if the movement is carnal, of human prudence, he, thinking to magnify and to illustrate it, will disparage and obscure it. God is so jealous of His glory that He does not will that it be illustrated, save by His Holy Spirit, and through His Holy Spirit.

That, "*Whilst you were sleeping,*" is well worthy to be considered ; for it might be retorted upon them, if you slept, how came you to see His disciples steal Him away ? By that : "*Until this day,*" it appears that St. Matthew wrote this history some years after Christ's resurrection, but before the destruction of Jerusalem.

XXVIII. 16-20.—Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him : but some doubted. And Jesus

came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world! Amen.

St. Matthew, having recorded the testimony of the holy women and of the guards, who were on watch at Christ's sepulchre, by way of certificates of Christ's resurrection, now records that of the eleven apostles, who saw Christ risen in Galilee, at the spot where He had assured them that they would see Him; and he records what Christ spoke to them; commanding them that they should go forth to preach the gospel, to baptize, and to teach Christian living; assuring them that He would be perpetually with them, without ever leaving them. Wherein are three things worthy of profound consideration.

The *first*, that Christ's disciples had doubted the truth of Christ's resurrection, notwithstanding that He had frequently prophesied of it to them, and that the women had told them of it; whence I gather, that to doubt, is no indication of infidelity, but of weakness and of infirmity; and, therefore, that they, who doubt, ought not to be held as infidels, although they doubt in matters of faith, but they ought to be held as weak and infirm; and they should pray to God affectionately, that He give them inwardly to feel the benefit of Christ in their minds, so that, increasing in faith, they may lay aside weakness and infirmity, and therewith doubt. I, therefore, am more surprised by them who do not doubt, than by them who do doubt; so much do I hold the never doubting to be suspicious, unless it be in those, who have doubted; because I know that doubt, nay, that unbelief, is natural to man;

and that belief is supernatural ; that it is the gift of God, and not to be acquired by human industry.

The second, that, from Christ's words, "*All power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth,*" we are partly enabled to form the conception, which we, as Christians, ought to hold of Christ ; upon which I have written a Consideration [cix], to which I remit myself ; because that I therein have stated, in what manner I understand Christ to have said, that He holds this absolute power upon earth ; and that, as to the mode in which He holds it in heaven, I remit myself to the experience which I shall gain, when finding myself there, I shall know Him, and shall see Him, face to face. As to that which here exercises doubts in some, who say, that Christ being the Word of God, the Son of God, what occasion was there that God should give Him what He already possessed ? it may be replied, that God gave this absolute power to that Christ-man, who died, was buried, and rose again ; and, in this very sense, St. Paul says, in Philippians ii. 9, "*Wherefore also, God hath highly exalted Him,*" &c. ; nay, it seems that Daniel understood this very same, when he says in chapter vii. 13, 14, "*I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages, should serve Him ; His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom, that which shall not be destroyed.*"

Christ's answer to Caiaphas, which we have seen in chapter xxvi., well agrees with these words of Daniel. I understand that Christ, by thus notifying this, His absolute power in heaven and on earth, to His disciples, purposed that they should know His omnipotence, and that we may know it ; in order that they should be assured, and that we may be assured, that all the creatures in heaven, on earth, and in hell combined, avail nothing against us whilst we are in Christ's school, He being with us, and we

with Him ; because that in Him we can do all things ; just as He could do everything ; St. Paul understood this, when he said in Phil. iv. 13, “ *I can do all things, through Christ, who strengtheneth me.* ”

The *third* thing worthy of consideration in these words of Christ, is the mode in which He instructed His disciples, having purposed to send them forth to preach, to baptize, and to teach.

Where they, who are about to send forth men to preach, to baptize, and to teach, may learn that they have first to instruct those whom they send forth, in the conception, which they ought to hold of Christ ; telling them that He has all power in heaven and on earth ; then they have to tell them the order<sup>1</sup> they should observe, and finally they have to assure them, that the Spirit of Christ will constantly attend them, let them go where they will ; in order that being assured of this, they may be free from personal solicitude, exerting all their solicitude upon the errand on which they are sent. They, too, who are inwardly moved to preach the gospel, and to teach Christian living, may here learn that the first thing they have to intimate to men, is the general indulgence and pardon through the justice of God, already executed upon Christ, entreating them upon the part of God and of Christ, that by the acceptance of this indulgence, they may hold themselves to be reconciled to God ; giving them the assurance, that they, who believe it, and are baptized, enjoy it.

By these words, “ *Go ye therefore and teach all nations,* ” I understand this to mean that the teaching is the proper intimation of the gospel ; and that afterwards they have to baptize them, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and

<sup>1</sup> The order to be observed in the introduction of the Christian doctrines, *ex. gr.*, 1st, man’s fall through original sin ; 2d, man’s lost estate, its consequence ; 3d, its only remedy, the gospel of man’s redemption, &c., &c. See Valdés’ tract “ *Upon the Fundamentals in Christian Teaching,* ” the original Spanish MS. of which was recently discovered by Dr. Edward Boehmer, and is now first translated into English by the Editor, and published by Trübner & Co., 1882, in Valdés’ Minor Works, the XVII Opuscules.

of the Holy Ghost, who shall hold themselves to be reconciled to God, who by acceptance of the intimation accept the teaching ; it will be their duty to assure them, that they are admitted into that union with the Father, with the Son, and with the Holy Ghost, which they as men can hold, who, by faith and by baptism, enjoy the general indulgence and pardon, who are regenerated ; they, as I have stated in a reply, change their nature, in the manner therein indicated. This is what I understand by those words : *baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*

As to how I understand that baptism, by virtue of the covenant, which consists in faith and in baptism, is a constituent in justification, I remit myself to what I have stated in a reply ; where I have also stated, that we, who have been baptized as infants, then begin inwardly to feel the fruit of baptism, when through divine inspiration, we with the heart accept the grace of the gospel, and so approve of our having been baptized ; that had we not been baptized, we would be baptized ; we resolve to live Christianly, and we imitate Christ by putting an end to all ambition and personal satisfaction.

Here likewise Christian preachers may learn, that to those, who have put an end to every form of ambition, and of personal satisfaction, having accepted the grace of the gospel, having been baptized, or having approved of having been baptized, they, the preachers, have to teach Christian living, by placing before them all that Christ taught His disciples, not as a law, but as a lesson in Christian life, in imitation of Christ ; in order that they, by their Christian life, may confirm their Christian faith, and may bear testimony to their Christian baptism, showing that, effectively, they believe with the heart ; and that they have baptized themselves, or have approved of having been baptized, because they have previously believed, because they have accepted the grace of the gospel.

This do I understand, by those words, “ *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;* ” so that by these words of Christ, they, who are inspired to preach the gospel, and to teach Christian living, learn that they have to intimate the gospel generally to all nations ; whilst they have not to baptize any, save those who have accepted the grace of the gospel ; and that they have not to teach Christian living to any, save those who, having accepted the grace of the gospel, have caused themselves to be baptized, or approve of having been baptized, and have put an end to every ambition and personal satisfaction, and have resolutely set themselves to live Christianly, by imitating Christ.

Now it appears that this proper order was observed in the primitive Church, and a very long period had elapsed ere baptism was given, save to those who were well instructed in Christian faith and in Christian living ; but the apostles, as appears from their history, in following this, which was Christ’s order, then baptized those who believed, those who accepted the grace of the gospel ; and it appears necessary that it should so be done, for [as I have stated in a reply] the faith of those who have not been baptized is exercised by baptism, for it appears to them to be but a joke, when told that they come to enjoy remission of sins and reconciliation with God, through Christ, by faith and by baptism without other further observance of the law ; just as the faith of those, who have been baptized, is confirmed by baptism itself, baptism serving them as a stay or support whereby their Christian faith is confirmed, for they say, had I not believed, I should not have been baptized, or, I should not have approved of being baptized, having determined to live as a baptized person, which is equivalent to saying, like one dead and risen again, *for in baptism, as St. Paul says, we die and rise again with Christ* (Rom. vi. 3, 4).

That, “ *Lo ! I am with you always,* ” &c., I understand that these words concern not only those who preach the

gospel and teach the Christian mode of life, but likewise those who accept the gospel and strive to live Christianly ; who all may certify themselves that Christ is, and ever will be with them without ever departing from them ; and I understand that this assurance of Christ's presence works a twofold effect upon us, who, having accepted the gospel, and having approved of being baptized, and, having put an end to every ambition and personal satisfaction, strive to live like Christians.

The *one* is, that we live secure against all the evil that all creatures combined can do us ; knowing and feeling that we, through Christ's presence, are strong enough to encounter them all, assured that they cannot hurt us. Whilst the *other* is, that we live the more upon our guard, never to deviate little or much from the obligations that devolve upon Christians, amongst whom Christ is, and will be, even unto the end of the world.

*They, who are not certain of this, Christ's presence, live in continual fear, because they trust in themselves, and distrust Christ ; and they do not live Christianly, neither do they keep the obligation or the decorum of Christians ; and judging from themselves, they say and affirm that there are no saints in the world, not remembering that they confess their existence when they rehearse in their creed "the communion of saints ;" whilst they say and affirm, that no one can be sure that he is in grace with God, not understanding that the gospel is nothing else but good news notified to men, telling them that Christ has reconciled them to God, that they should believe and be baptized, and that they should enjoy the reconciliation ; whence it is to be understood that a man is to that extent a Christian, in proportion as he is sure, that he is through Christ in grace with God, being reconciled to God.*

To whom I render infinite thanks, that He has brought me to partake of this His divine grace, and has favoured me with His Holy Spirit in the interpretation of this most Divine Scripture of the life and teaching of His only-

begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; whose glory has been my aim, in stating what I have succeeded in declaring in this exposition; desiring that that wherein I have erred, or have failed, may be to my own shame and confusion, my own existence, that which I have as a child of Adam, being recognised in my failure; whilst in the successful exposition, the other mode of my existence may be recognised, that which I have as a child of God, incorporated by faith and by baptism into the only begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be glory evermore!

AMEN.

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THE END.

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# LIVES

*OF THE TWIN BROTHERS*

JUÁN AND ALFONSO DE VALDÉS.

BY

*u*  
**EDWARD BOEHMER,**  
D.D., PH.D.,

EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF STRASBURG,  
CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE SPANISH ACADEMY.

*Extracted from the Bibliotheca Wiffeniana, with the Author's  
Additions on Recent Discoveries of Valdés' Works,*

AND

WITH INTRODUCTION BY THE EDITOR,

**JOHN T. BETTS,**  
OF C. C. C. OXON. MEMBER OF LINCOLN'S INN.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE Editor, engaged in publishing the works of Juán de Valdés in English, anticipates that the interest of the public will be concentrated upon Juán exclusively, and conceives the surprise that will be felt by the reader, who, desirous of learning the story of our author's life, finds Professor Boehmer bringing forward the lives of the twins, which have been so blended and confused by different writers, that they were held to have failed to present them distinctly apart.

The reader has to be informed that these twins were marvellously like, each to the other, in features, in voice, and otherwise; whilst their memory has been mystified by repeated statements, that the two Christian names Juán and Alfonso belonged to but one and the same person.

The late Benjamin Wiffen<sup>1</sup> adduced evidence that they were twins, proving Juán to have been a scholar, a courtier, a Papal chamberlain,<sup>2</sup> and subsequently the most

<sup>1</sup> See *Life and Writings of Juán de Valdés* by Benjamin B. Wiffen, with the CX Divine Considerations, translated and published by John T. Betts. London, Quaritch, 1865.

<sup>2</sup> The post which Valdés held at the court of Clement VII. will have been that of "Cameriere d'onore, di spada e cappa," meaning a chamberlain of honour, a secular, a layman, a post of honour involving no regular duties. See Moroni's *Historico-ecclesiastical Dictionary of Learning upon Papal Chamberlains*. Moroni's *Dizionario di erudizione storico-ecclesiastical*, vol. vii., Venezia, 1841, p. 48. See Hunadoro's *Relazione della corte di Roma*, Venezia, 1671, p. 14; where it is stated that they do not present themselves at the palace except when they choose to do so, and that it is usual for the Popes to send the Cardinal's hat by them to newly-appointed Cardinals.

influential reformer in Italy, and he accepted it as an historical fact that Juán died at Naples in 1540; whilst he proved Alfonso to have been from early manhood Latin Secretary to the Emperor Charles V., and a constant attendant upon him in all his progresses; but of his death Wiffen was without evidence.

We now know that Alfonso's death is vouched by Thomas Cranmer's despatch to Henry VIII., given at length in the lives now published. It is also certified by his surviving brother in the very recently discovered letter of Juán's. This letter presents Juán wailing over Alfonso's death, which, as it for ever settles the question, I hereafter append, with a notice of it in Professor Boehmer's own words. It testifies to the loving, gentle soul of Juán, and is in many respects extremely interesting, besides that of its being the only autograph letter of his extant.

The knowledge of the moral character and of the social status of these brothers cannot be matter of indifference to those who read their works, for their position commanded the best information upon every subject they discussed, and opportunity was not wasted upon men of their commanding ability. They not only knew everything that transpired, but they understood the facts and impulses that brought them about. Noble by birth, virtuous by discipline, diligent by habit, and the associates of the choicest spirits upon earth, expectation is naturally led to anticipate much from them, and that expectation is fully justified. Their secular works, whilst instructive, are admirable in point of style; their devotional works, written amidst superstitious gloom and fierce Inquisitorial tyranny, blaze with evangelic light. The tone of their works is charming and ennobling, and their moral reputation stamps their statements with authority.

If the character and influence of the works of the brothers Juán and Alfonso be such as above described, we may learn what Juán's personal influence was upon his

contemporaries from a statement made by Antonio Caracciolo in his life of Pope Paul IV.<sup>1</sup> quoted by Dr. Gibbings. He says, "that Naples was for the first time infested with Lutheranism by German soldiers, of whom 6000 were infantry and 2000 cavalry, but Juán de Valdés alone, who arrived there in the year 1535, caused, he conceives, a far greater destruction of souls than had been effected by these many thousands of military heretics."

What Juán de Valdés was to his personal friends we may learn from Giacomo Bonfadio's lament upon his death, expressed in a letter to Pietro Carnesecchi: "Where shall we go, now Signor Valdés is dead? This has truly been a great loss for us and the world, for Signor Valdés was one of the rare men of Europe, and those writings he has left on the Epistles of Paul and the Psalms of David most amply show it. He was, without doubt, in his actions, his speech, and in all his conduct a perfect man. With but a particle of his soul he governed his frail and spare body; with the larger part, with his pure understanding, as though out of the body, he was always raised in the contemplation of truth and of divine things. I sympathise with Messer Marc' Antonio [Flaminio], for he loved and admired him above all others."<sup>2</sup>

Bonfadio, an accomplished scholar, wrote the annals of Genoa; statements made in them affecting influential members of that Republic, prompted them by vindictive resentment falsely to accuse him before a criminal tribunal, which sentenced Bonfadio to death; and he actually was beheaded.

The abbot Antonio Sambuca, editing Count Mazzu-

<sup>1</sup> *Vita e Gestii di Giovanni Caraffa cioè di Paolo IV., P.M.* In folio, preserved among the Harl. MSS. Brit. Mus.

<sup>2</sup> Bonfadio's letter is found in the Aldine edition of the *Letteere Volgari di diversi nobilissimi hvomini.* In Vinegia, MDXLV.

chelli's collection of Bonfadio's letters and of his other compositions in prose and in verse, speaks of Bonfadio in his preface dedicated to Cardinal Querini, the librarian of the Vatican, in these terms, "Now under the authority of your protection do I present to the public Giacomo Bonfadio's works, *he being the glory of scholars and an honour to my country.*"

The following extract from Dr. Gibbings is quoted<sup>1</sup> in order to give the reader a suitable conception of both Bonfadio's and Valdés' friend (and Valdés' pupil), Carnesecchi, who in connection with Valdés is a very important personage. "Riguccio Galluzzi,<sup>2</sup> Historiographer-Royal of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, informs us that Pietro Carnesecchi, the intimate and much-loved friend of Cardinals Pole, Sadolet, and Bembo, was a member of a Florentine family of high rank, which had always followed the fortunes of the Medici. He was appointed Secretary to Pope Clement VII., one of that illustrious race, and was afterwards Protonotary to the Apostolic See. Such superior influence did he exercise as an administrator, that it was rumoured and commonly believed that he, and not his patron, wielded pontifical power. One of his preferments was an abbey in France, in which country he was countenanced and protected by Catherine de' Medici, Queen of Henry II.; he enjoyed likewise the favour of Cosmo de' Medici, on whom Pope Pius V. subsequently conferred the title of Grand Duke. After the death of Clement, being weary of protracted residence in Rome, or rather from abhorrence of the abuses of the papal court, which he could no longer restrain, he retired to his abbacy at Naples, and visited various cities in Italy, devoting himself exclusively to

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Trial and Martyrdom of Pietro Carnesecchi, some time Secretary to Pope Clement VII. and Apostolic Protonotary : Dublin University Press, 1856, p. xiii. of Introduction (a highly valued work).

<sup>2</sup> Storia del Granducato di Toscana Firenze, 1822.

study and to intercourse with learned men. He was thoroughly conversant with Greek and Latin literature, an eloquent speaker, and a poet. In France he was greatly honoured; he was regarded with the utmost esteem; and in his native land especially he became the light and centre of all those who sighed and prayed for reform in the Church. Such a man could not long escape the vigilance of the Inquisitors; and the criminal process, now divulged, discloses all the most important particulars relative to the measures adopted against him for twenty-one years (from 1546 to 1567)."

Carnesecchi's letters to Giulia Gonzaga, written through a series of years, and many years before the final process, were adduced against him as evidence of fact and of sentiment, establishing his heretical dissent from Papal doctrine and of opposition to Papal decrees; and they doubtless served the Inquisitors as their warrant for his condemnation to the stake.

Carnesecchi was called upon to justify every statement and sentiment contained in these letters, expressed as they were in the confidence of friendship, especially those affecting their mutually dearest friend, Juán de Valdés, his life and teachings. In relation to these sentiments Carnesecchi had to show that they admitted of orthodox interpretation, or failing to do so, the Inquisitors availed themselves of them, twisting them and perverting them, as bases of criminal conviction.

Carnesecchi was upon the most intimate terms with Juán de Valdés, nor was he less intimate with Giulia Gonzaga after Valdés' death; this triple cord of mutual regard was of the strongest. Possibly no man ever lived that did more by word and by writings to teach another spiritual truth, than did Valdés for Giulia.

On spiritual subjects Giulia and Carnesecchi were both Valdés' pupils; they both proved their spiritual loyalty to his teachings, and their own convictions, by never recanting,

or receding from, them. Carnesecchi went to the stake in vindication of his; neither did Giulia prove recreant to hers; death alone delivered her from the bloodthirsty tribunal before which she had been summoned to appear just before she expired, death thus saving her "from the evil to come." Humanity has not been illustrated by three more exalted personages. Carnesecchi's letters to Giulia have been rendered historical documents, by embodiment in Carnesecchi's process; they reveal the soul of Valdés so fully, so truthfully, so intimately, that he is thus better known to us, who study these documents, than he was to his contemporaries.

Brought from the archives of the Inquisition at Rome by a French officer, one of Napoleon's soldiers, in sixty-six volumes, they are deposited in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, and the editor has now before him an extract of Carnesecchi's process, contained in 381 pages of printed matter, transcribed for the Italian Government,<sup>1</sup> and edited by Count Giacomo Manzoni of Lugo.

Here follows Juán de Valdés' only letter, which is thus introduced by Dr. Boehmer:—

"The following letter has been discovered by Dr. Otto Waltz, Professor in the University of Dorpat, who sent me the copy he himself made, and obligingly permitted me to print it. He will shortly publish with his own annotations some inedited letters of Alfonso de Valdés to the same Dantiscus, copied from a Dantiscan collection (in which also was found this letter of Juán de Valdés). Now, as to Dantiscus, I restrict myself to state that he was born in 1483, was three times in Spain, and died in 1548, Bishop of Ermeland, leaving much Latin verse, subsequently collected in 1764 into a volume, in which are found sacred hymns that testify to his piety. Excepting this letter of Juán de Valdés addressed to that

<sup>1</sup> See "Miscellanea di Storia Italiana." In royal 8vo, vol. x., published at Turin in 1870.

prelate, we have no other writing in an epistolary form that is not a religious treatise. This letter is written in Latin, and is, as far as we know, the only autograph of his in existence.

“ This letter, highly characteristic from its most amiable and ingenuous tone, furnishes us with some interesting facts.

“ Since Juán himself here styles himself Alfonso’s brother and twin, it is no longer possible to deny the fact. It is of greater importance still that Juán, when giving his address, states that he will be with the Pope (Clement VII.)

“ The letter is written from Bologna;<sup>1</sup> the original address still remains. Dantiscus has written in his own handwriting, ‘ Letter of Juán de Valdés, dated Bologna, 12th January 1533.’

“ The red seal is in good preservation.

“ ED. BOEHMER.

“ VIENNA.”

*Reverendissimo Domino ac doctissimo viro, Domino Joanni  
Dantisco, Episcopo Culmensi, Serenissimi Poloniae  
Regis consiliario, Domino meo colendissimo, in Polonia.*

Nisi comptum haberem, præsul amplissime, tuum  
animum, sic sanctissimis atque honestissimis disciplinis  
præditum, ut ab illorum instituto, qui non virtutem sed  
fortunam in hominibus diligere solent, penitus abhorreas,  
handquaquam hoc negotii essem aggressus, nunc autem  
quum meminerim te cum fratre meo Alfonso Valdesio,  
qui infelicissimo quodam fato nobis ereptus est, priusquam  
illum apud Cæsarem locum nactus esset, amicitiam iniisse,  
non veritus sum meis te literis interpellare quibus intelligeres  
me non æque ad fortunæ bona, quæ mihi ab ipso  
fratre testamento relicita sunt, animum adiplicuisse, atque

<sup>1</sup> See “ Lives,” p. 4.

ad eorum gratiam ambiendam quos ille vel observabat ut dominos ac majores, vel diligebat ut amicos, vel amplectebatur ut minores, ut eos ego aut venerari ut dominos, aut observare ut majores, aut diligere ut æquales possim, iidemque me veluti illius fratrem ac gemellum, cui natura eadem facie lineamenta eundemque vocis sonitum est elargita, amplectantur ac diligent; licet enim animi dotes, quæ ille dei optimi maximi beneficio erat assecutus, in me non æque atque in illo inveniantur, non ideo ab iis, quibus carus erat frater, sum despiciendus, quando non ut mea causa, sed fratris potius me amplectantur peto. Quum itaque, amplissime præsul, te ille semper ut majorem observaverit, tuque illum semper ut amicum dilexeris amplexatusque sis, aequum erit ut tu hujus erga eum amoris et benevolentiae me hæredem facias, id quod tum te fecisse existimabo quum aliquid mihi in quo meum erga te animum meamque spontaneam servitutem ostendere possim injunxeris. Cæterum si tam cari amici jactura à te aliquid quod chartis commissum sic extorsit, illud, quidquid fuerit, ad me mittas obsecro, ut hoc amoris tui symbolo acerbissimum meum dolorem nonnunquam lenire ac mitigare possim. Ut autem quo literas tuas ad me mandare debeas, scias, me apud Summum Pontificem futurum scito; ubi si quid fuerit quod ad te quomodocunque pertineat, mihi committes id quod mihi quidem honorificentissimum ac jucundissimum erit. Bene vale, amplissime præsul, et me Alfonsi Valdesii loco ama.

BONONIE, XII. Januarii MDXXXIII.

Dominationis Tuæ Reverendissimæ  
subditissimus clientulus

JOANNES VALDESIUS.

## TRANSLATION.

*To the most reverend and highly learned Master John Dantiscus, Bishop of Culm, Counsellor of his most Serene Majesty the King of Poland, my much-revered Lord, in Poland.*

Had I not the certainty, most honoured master, that thy mind is so moulded by the most sacred and by the most virtuous teachings, so as to be wholly averse to the principles of those, who are wont to love a man, not for his ability, but for his fortunes, I assuredly should not have taken this step; now, however, when I recollect that thou wert intimate with my brother, Alfonso Valdés, who by sad fate has been carried off from us, before that he attained that post about the Emperor's person, I feel no hesitation in addressing myself to thee by letter, in order that thou mightest thereby understand that my mind is not so intent upon attaining the property bequeathed me under my brother's will, as upon conciliating their favour, whom he looked up to as his masters and superiors, or whom he loved as friends, or whom he cherished as his inferiors; that I may be able either to venerate them as masters, or to look up to them as superiors, or to love them as equals, and that they also may esteem and love me, as his twin-brother, to whom nature has given the same features and the same tone of voice; for if the intellectual endowments, which he, by the grace of our good and great God, had acquired, be not found as richly and copiously in me as in him, I am not on that account to be despised by those to whom my brother was dear, for I do not challenge of them that they value me for my sake, but rather that they should do so for my brother's. Since, revered master, he ever highly esteemed thee as a superior, and that thou hast ever loved and valued him as a friend, it will be just that thou now make me heir of this thy love and of thy benevolence towards him, and I

shall then assume that thou wilt have done so, when thou shalt give me something in charge wherein I may be enabled to show my feelings towards thee by readiness of service. Shouldst thou have felt constrained by the loss of so dear a friend to commit anything to writing, I earnestly entreat thee to send it, whatever it may be, to me, that I may by this token of thy love occasionally soothe and mitigate my most bitter grief. But in order that thou mayest know where to address me by letter, know that I shall henceforth be near the person of the Pope; where should aught transpire, in any manner affecting thine interests, thou wilt commit its management to me, which will be most honouring and most agreeable to me.

Fare thee well, most noble President, and love me in the stead of Alfonso Valdés.

BOLOGNA, 12th January 1533.

Of all clients under thy most reverend sway I commend myself to thee as the most submissive

JUÁN DE VALDÉS.

Don Luis Usos i Rio's name must never be forgotten in association with the revival of Valdés' works, for he first translated Juán de Valdés' CX. Considerations into Spanish, publishing them in 1850. This edition ranks as the ninth in the series of the *Reformistas Antiguos Españoles*, consisting of twenty volumes edited and issued by him during twenty-five years. The biographer, when commemorating Don Luis, the Christian gentleman, the scholar, the patriot, and the philanthropist, will ever have to couple the name of his faithful, assiduous, and worthy friend, coadjutor, and correspondent, Benjamin B. Wiffen, as the man whose honourable life was spent as his bibliographer, in procuring the recondite materials for Don Luis'

use. Valdesian scholars have ever held Don Luis and Wiffen as inseparably associated in their lifelong work, the revival of the ancient Spanish Reformers; whilst they who knew their labours more intimately, associate a third name with theirs, which, if not mentioned here, is withheld from publicity by prudential motives.

The re-prints of the works of Juán de Valdés were especially intended for the benefit of Spain. Don Luis embodied this sentiment in his writings, he presented it in the title-pages of the works he published.

In Wiffen's preface to the History of the death of Juán Diaz, the last volume of the series, a posthumous volume, which appeared in September 1865, six weeks after Usoz's death, he summarises his deceased friend's character thus: "Don Luis Usoz was a man of sound and exact learning, of great simplicity and modesty, of genuine truthfulness both in his life and in his writings. He loved his country, he lamented its historical decline, and sought its highest welfare, believing that universal RELIGIOUS LIBERTY, with the knowledge of the Bible, forms the surest basis of all civilisation, national, social, and individual."

The translator of Juán de Valdés' works into English, and their editor, believes Don Luis' effort to have been as intelligent as it was beneficent, and that the publication will prove to have been influentially "*para bien de España*," for the welfare of Spain, and thus impressed, the editor declares his sole motive for translating and publishing Valdés' works to be his firm belief that they are eminently calculated to benefit the English-speaking nations of the world.

The editor's attempt to popularise Valdés' Writings, by appending Dr. Boehmer's 'Lives' to every one of his translations now publishing, will be appreciated by every reader who shall become interested in him and in them; and the reader will be led to approve it the more, when told that but imperfect knowledge is now attainable

even by researches in the British Museum and in University Libraries ; and that such information as he can get there will be less definite and less reliable than that now presented to him.

If Valdés' teachings, restricted by the Inquisition to manuscript copies, circulated from hand to hand, at the greatest personal risk to both giver and receiver, availed in the sixteenth century by their influence on the choicest spirits of that age, the wisest and the best, to shake the Papacy, it was by the Holy Spirit's influence that they did so ; what may we not expect with the same mighty agency, now that the press issues the Prince Consort's Life in sixpenny parts, that it issues the New Testament in several languages at a penny each, and that Christian gentlemen have began to publish parts of Valdés' minor works for sale at a penny a copy, approximately two thousand per cent. cheaper than the cost in the regular form of publication !

JOHN T. BETTS.

PEMBURY, KENT, May 1882.

THE LIVES  
OF  
JUÁN AND ALFONSO DE VALDÉS.

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ABOUT the beginning of the sixteenth century, Fernando de Valdés, the hereditary Regidor of Cuenca in Castile, had twin-sons born to him, Alfonso and Juán, who, after careful training, distinguished themselves in Spanish literature, not only as authors who knew how to write their own language with classical purity, but also as religious reformers.

Alfonso was in the suite of the Emperor Charles V. at his coronation in Aix-la-Chapelle in the year 1520. He saw, in the burning of Luther's books, in the following year at Worms, "not the end, but the beginning of a tragedy." It then appeared to him as impudent upon the part of the monk of Wittenberg to declare the Pope to be a heretic and schismatic; but he nevertheless found it deplorable that the Pope should stubbornly oppose the convocation of a General Council, by which alone the peace of Christendom could be secured. The impossibility of bringing the Lutheran commotion to an end without such a Council was persistently urged, at Worms, by the Emperor's Grand Chancellor Mercurino

da Gattinara.<sup>1</sup> Under him we meet Alfonso, in the year 1524, as an Imperial Secretary of State.

Alfonso de Valdés was a great admirer of Erasmus, whose writings, in the original and in translations, as greatly promoted the reformation in Spain, as they did everywhere else. At the time when the monks in that country made a violent attack upon the famous scholar, and tried to get from the Inquisitor-General a prohibition of his works, Alfonso generously interposed, and employing all his influence in favour of the great humanist, he succeeded in averting the proscription. From that time we find Alfonso in correspondence with Erasmus. It was presumably Alfonso Valdés who penned the Imperial answer to Erasmus, in December 1527, expressing the Emperor's joy on learning, by Erasmus' letter, that the Lutheran phrenzy was declining, a result brought about by the efforts of Erasmus himself, who had published able polemical writings against Luther's *servum arbitrium*.

On the other hand, Alfonso's name is found subscribed to Imperial letters of the years 1526 and 1527, addressed to Pope Clement VII. and to the College of Cardinals, in which a General Council is most energetically demanded.<sup>2</sup> When Rome was stormed and sacked, in the year 1527, Alfonso wrote a dialogue, in order to vindicate the Emperor, and to prove that terrible catastrophe to have been a retribution upon the sins of the Papal city. In 1529 he accompanied the Emperor in his progress through Italy; he attended the Pope's and Emperor's Congress at Bologna, and he went on with the Court to the Diet in Germany. Soon after the arrival at Augsburg, he sent for Melanthon, in order, if possible, to bring about an understanding with that champion of the Evangelicals. The intercourse between these two mild and

<sup>1</sup> The numbers refer to the notes in the "Bibliotheca Wiffeniana: Spanish Reformers of Two Centuries." London: Trübuer, 1874.—ED.

moderate men was a very friendly one, and with the sovereign Valdés successfully set off the conciliatory and reasonable tone of the Protestants, and smoothed the way for a public reading of their Confession in the presence of the Emperor and of the powers of the realm. For two years more did he follow Charles through Germany as his Secretary. It was with pleasure that he saw the Emperor at the Diet of Ratisbon constrained to yield greater liberty to the evangelical movement.

In the autumn of 1532 Alfonso de Valdés died at Vienna. Thomas Cranmer, in a despatch to King Henry VIII., dated from Villach, in Carinthia, October 20, 1532, tells of *a great infection of the plague, whereof many of the Emperor's household died, and among others (Valdés) Waldesius, a Spaniard, the Emperor's Chief Secretary, who enjoyed his singular favour. He was well learned in the Latin tongue, and partly in the Greek; and whensoever the Emperor would have any thing well and exactly done in the Latin tongue, it was ever put to Waldesius.*<sup>3</sup>

His brother Juán found more leisure for literary production. He had spent years absorbed in court-life and in an insatiable perusal of chivalrous romances, but impressed by the great religious historic events then acting on the world's theatre, the Reformation, the hidden springs of which his brother could from his own experience explain, he found himself attracted by realities that affected the glory of God and the welfare of man.

Shortly after that Alfonso had put his dialogue on the sack of Rome into circulation, Juán composed another, entitled "Mercury and Charon." Its tendency is both political and religious. The author justifies the Emperor; he does so with respect to the challenge which he had given to the King of France to fight him in duel, and he depicts the then ruinously corrupt condition of the Romish Church. He eloquently accomplishes his design, proving both his statements by arguments, evolved in con-

versations, which the ferryman of the lower world holds with different personages<sup>4</sup> on their way there.

Compromised by this work with the Holy Office, the Inquisition, Juán did not feel himself safe in Spain, and about the year 1530 he left it for Naples, where the Spanish Inquisition had not yet been established. In 1531 he went to Rome. In January 1533 we find him nominated and acting as Chamberlain of the Pope at Bologna. From thence he wrote to Dantiscus, Bishop of Culm, an old friend of his brother Alfonso. This letter is the only Latin document we have of Juán's, and his only known autograph. The Pope and the Emperor were at that time both present at Bologna. There they concluded on February 24th a confederation, by which the Pope promised to recommend to the Christian princes the convocation of a General Council, and to accelerate by Papal decision the validity of Queen Catherine's, the Emperor's aunt's, marriage, she having been repudiated by her husband, Henry VIII, King of England. The Papal decision, withheld until 1534, was in favour of this unfortunate Queen, whom Juán de Valdés had vigorously defended in his *Dialogue between Mercury and Charon*. It was an act of courtesy, so much the more refined, as it could not be done without self-renunciation, that Clement VII. took the author of this dialogue for his Chamberlain, he having therein severely criticised this Pope's policy, and being, moreover, the twin brother of Charles' late Secretary of State, Alfonso, who had had a very serious altercation with the Spanish Nuncio. Juán, however, did not stay long at the Papal Court. Before Clement went to France in the autumn of the same year, 1533, Valdés returned from Rome to Naples, after an absence of two years, and probably never again left this city and its environs.<sup>5</sup>

At Naples he wrote in 1533 his *Dialogue on Language*, viz., the Spanish language, a work which is ac-

nowledged to be of high authority in relation to that idiom. It was with difficulty that some friends prevailed upon him to devote his time to give these specimens of his literary studies and principles, for he had already directed all his efforts to the composition of works of a devotional and biblical character. Without depreciating the various branches of what is called profane knowledge, and especially the *humaniora*, still he had learned in the school of St. Paul to rank the Gospel, forasmuch as it affects salvation, far above all worldly wisdom.

After his return from Rome to Naples he was surrounded by the choicest spirits of Italy, comprising such men as Marcantonio Flaminio and Carnesecchi, Ochino and Peter Martyr Vermiglio. He had also, at that time, for his pupils and friends a circle of accomplished women, among whom stood pre-eminently Giulia Gonzaga, a beauty praised by Ariosto,<sup>6</sup> and whose fame had spread so far, that Barbarossa, an African corsair, in 1534, disembarked near Fondi in the *Terra di Lavoro*, in order to kidnap her as a present for the Sultan, a fate from which she narrowly escaped.

During the Emperor's residence at Naples in 1536, at one and the same time, Ochino preached there the Lent sermons, with such wondrous power, that the Emperor said "The stones must cry out;" Peter Martyr convened assemblies, to whom he admirably expounded the Scriptures; whilst Juán de Valdés inspired all amongst whom he moved with evangelical spirit. It was then that Giulia Gonzaga became desirous to learn how to live in newness of life, and asked of Valdés the way. His *Christian Alphabet* is a dialogue sustained by him and Giulia, and nothing could better serve to bring vividly before us the religious movement then going on around Valdés, and which, to the greatest extent, originated in himself. Giulia soon withdrew into a nunnery at Naples, where, without taking the vows, she found a quiet abode,

and escaped being engulfed in the restless world, the peril, which a lady of her rank and endowments could in those days and in that place, scarcely otherwise avoid. The *Alphabet*, which Valdés gave her as a primer, composed with relation to her special personal requirements,<sup>7</sup> was soon followed by his expositions of Scripture.

To Giulia Gonzaga he dedicated his own versions of the Sacred Scriptures, translated from the Hebrew and from the Greek into Spanish, and for her use did he write his Commentaries upon them in the same language; first the Psalms,<sup>8</sup> then all St. Paul's Epistles, exclusive of that to the Hebrews,<sup>9</sup> those of St. Peter, lastly the Gospel of St. Matthew, and possibly the other Gospels likewise. Of all these, we have at present but St. Matthew's Gospel, the Epistle to the Romans, the first Epistle to the Corinthians, and his Commentaries upon those three books. We have his translation of the Psalms, with his Commentary upon the first book, that is, from the 1st to the 41st Psalm inclusive.

Ancient translations of the Old Testament, from Hebrew into Spanish, which had never been printed, existed indeed in the days of Valdés; but it would seem that to Juán de Valdés the honour is due of having been the first person, who undertook to translate the New Testament from Greek into Spanish.<sup>10</sup>

He, moreover, composed numerous religious treatises in Spanish. We have a collection of CX Considerations; nearly two-thirds of them are but Italian translations. We have seven of his doctrinal Epistles in the original, (Spanish), with an eighth in Italian; and of such epistles he at least wrote thirty. Of his Discourses, some two or three are known, but only as Italian translations. Of his Questions and Answers, we know that there were as many as thirty-three, but there is only one extant, and that is found appended to the *Alfabeto*, an Italian translation.<sup>11</sup>

In 1545 Valdés' treatise on Christian Repentance, on Christian Faith, and on Christian Life, together with four other of his minor works, were printed in an Italian translation in Rome itself, in the very year of the opening of the Council of Trent. In this paper, of which the Spanish original has recently been printed, he develops the following ideas: that had he had to prescribe regulations for preaching the Gospel of Christ, he would have prescribed that repentance should be preached first; secondly, justification by faith; and thirdly, connected with this article, the necessity of testifying to Christian faith by Christian works; which works, he says, will be rewarded in the present life by corporeal and spiritual benefits, and in the future life by graduated glory. Moreover he suggests, that after three warnings, the avaricious, the ambitious, the blasphemous, the gluttonous, the luxurious, the quarrelsome, and those who seek dishonest gains, and who delight in illicit games, and similarly those who are given to vain ceremonies and superstitious customs, attributing to creatures and to times and to words more than is becoming, and than Holy Scripture and Christian faith attribute to them, should be excommunicated. Then should we he says, in our own age, see a Christian Church very similar to that of the Apostolic age. Those, however, he adds, who are not in this Church, must not think themselves aliens to it, so long as they like to look at the Christian life; they will by prayer and labour get into it themselves.

Juán has also written a Catechism, instruction for children. The Spanish is lost, the Italian translation, recently reprinted, is entitled, *Spiritual Milk*, and was translated by Peter Paul Vergerio into Latin,<sup>12</sup> and again from the Latin, translations were made into German and Polish.<sup>13</sup> Towards its close Valdés puts forward those articles, in which advanced youth is afterwards to be in-

structed; as, for instance, the Lord's Supper and the Most Holy Trinity.

Valdés' CX Considerations have been translated into five languages; they had also been retranslated into Spanish before the originals of thirty-nine of them were discovered. Three editions have appeared in English.

To the editor of the first English translation, Nicholas Ferrar, who scrupulously hesitated to publish it, on account of certain passages in the book, George Herbert wrote in 1638: "I wish you by all means to publish it, for these three eminent things observable therein: First, that God, in the midst of Popery, should open the eyes of one to understand and express so clearly and excellently the intent of the Gospel in the acceptation of Christ's righteousness (as he showeth through all his Considerations); a thing strangely buried and darkened by the adversaries, and their great stumbling-block. Secondly, the great honour and reverence which he everywhere bears towards our dear Master and Lord, concluding every Consideration almost with His holy name, and setting his merit forth so piously, for which I do so love him, that, were there nothing else, I would print it, that with it, the honour of my Lord might be published. Thirdly, the many pious rules of ordering our life, about mortification, and observation of God's kingdom within us, and the working thereof, of which he was a very diligent observer. These three things are very eminent in the author, and overweigh the defects (as I conceive), towards the publishing thereof."<sup>18</sup>

To Juán de Valdés' simple evangelical teaching is to be traced back the book *On the Benefit of Christ*. The first author of it was a monk of the Black Benedictines, called Don Benedetto, of Mantua, who wrote it in a monastery of his order near Mount Etna; then he asked his friend Marcantonio Flaminio to polish it, in order to

render it more attractive, and so Flaminio, while leaving the subject unaltered, remodelled the excellent tract according to his taste.<sup>19</sup> It was believed to have been extirpated by the Inquisition, when it reappeared in 1855, reprinted from a copy preserved at Cambridge; and it readily won the admiring love of all, who love the Gospel.

Many interesting statements on Valdés and the Valdesian movement are given by Carnesecchi, in his depositions before the tribunal of the Inquisition at Rome.<sup>20</sup> "Although I had known Juán Valdés at Rome in the time of Pope Clement,"<sup>21</sup> Carnesecchi reports, "I cannot say that I knew him as a theologian before the year 1540 in Naples. For when in Rome, I did not know that he applied himself to the study of sacred literature, but I knew him only as a modest and well-bred courtier, and as such I liked him very much, so that the intercourse and familiarity I afterwards had with him at Naples was a continuation of our friendship made at Rome; at Naples, however, the friendship grew to be a spiritual one, for I found him entirely given up to the Spirit, and wholly intent on the study of Holy Scripture. This, however, would not have been sufficient with me, to give him the credit I did, now that the *gentiluomo di spada e cappa*, the layman and courtier, had, for me, suddenly become the theologian, had I not observed what a high place he occupied in the eyes of Fra Bernardino Ochino, who then was preaching, to the admiration of everybody, at Naples, and who professed to receive the themes of many of his sermons from Valdés, from whom he used to get a note on the evening preceding the morning on which he was to ascend the pulpit;<sup>22</sup> and if Fra Bernardino's opinion had not been in harmony with that of Flaminio, whom I thought such a prudent and learned man, that he would not have been imposed upon; and so sincere and worthy, that he would not have wished

to delude others; especially such a great friend of his as I was, and on a matter of such importance as religion."<sup>23</sup> It was by Valdés that Flaminio had been led to the conviction of justification by faith.<sup>24</sup> Carnesecchi was introduced by Valdés himself to Peter Martyr Vermiglio, who was a great friend of the Spaniard.<sup>25</sup> At Naples, Carnesecchi lived in the house of Giulia Gonzaga.<sup>26</sup> In a letter to her, written almost twenty years afterwards, in 1559, he acknowledges that he owed to her mediation the beneficent influence on him of Valdés' holy teaching and of the intercourse with this man, whom he knew before Donna Giulia, but not in such a manner as to derive that benefit from it.<sup>27</sup> Her he expressly thanked, as well that he had been delivered from superstitious and false religion, and had placed the hope of his salvation, not in works, but in faith, as also that he was kept within due limits and not engulfed by Lutheranism.<sup>28</sup> He believed that those who differed from the modern Roman Church in the article of justification, whilst keeping what he was persuaded to be the true catholic and apostolic faith, would be saved.<sup>29</sup> But although he accepted that fundamental article of the German religious reformation, he disapproved of Luther's separation from the body of the Catholic Church. That separation he saw especially manifested in the disobedience of the head of the Protestants, by refusing to appear at the Council, and to submit to its determination, and also by his contumacy against the Apostolic See. This was likewise Flaminio's view.<sup>30</sup> Nor was Carnesecchi, when accepting the main doctrine of Luther and of Valdés, aware of those consequences, which, as he was afterwards told, derived from it, viz., "that we do not want the sacrament of penitence, nor contrition, nor of satisfaction in order to regain grace lost by mortal sin, nor of purgatory."<sup>31</sup> Valdés and Flaminio explained all this to him: justification by faith was

taught, not only by Holy Scripture, but also by all the chief doctors of the Church, by Augustine, by Chrysostom, by Bernard, by Origen, by Hilary, by Prosper, and by others. Those doctors, it was true, in their sermons to the people, extolled works as necessary to salvation, but they did so, only lest people should give themselves over to licentiousness, which Carnesecchi stated before his judges had been the case in Germany, and in other countries, where justification by faith alone had been freely preached. His friends at Naples asserted, that all true Christians believed this article, and if not explicitly, yet implicitly, and if not earlier, it was revealed to them, at death. When to such subtleties Carnesecchi replied: that he found it strange that there were so few persons, who held that faith; they reminded him of the seven thousand who had not bent their knees to Baal, and moreover they said, that that section of modern preachers, who suppressed that article, was silenced only by the same reserve which moved St. Augustine not to preach on predestination, in order not to scandalise the weak ones.<sup>32</sup> Valdés taught justification by faith, without touching upon, and even without hinting at, those consequences; be it, says Carnesecchi, that he did not accept them, or be it that he dissimulated them, in order not to scandalise his disciples.<sup>33</sup> Carnesecchi was also of opinion, according to Valdes' teaching, that he who felt himself justified by faith, could count himself among the elect, and might consequently be sure, or at least greatly confident, that he would be saved, if living that life which becomes a true member of Christ, and if he showed his faith, whenever he had an opportunity to do it, by his good works and good habits; though doing this from gratitude for the benefit received, and in order to glorify God, and not in order to acquire eternal life, this being acquired by the merits of Christ, imputed to the believer. He did not, however, deny, that grace and justification were, by

means of such works, augmented in this life, and higher degrees of glory acquired in the life to come; nor that he who is justified must strive to become just in himself, as he is just in Christ, acquiring the habit of this righteousness *formally*, viz., procuring to have inherent righteousness through love poured into the heart by the Holy Spirit, not contenting himself with that righteousness which is imputed to him, and of which he partakes by faith.<sup>34</sup>

Juán de Valdés died in the summer of 1541.<sup>35</sup> His decease was placid.<sup>36</sup> He was, in his last illness, visited by the Archbishop of Otranto, his dear friend, who used to commend his writings and discourses in matters of religion.<sup>37</sup> When, in 1543, the Archbishop, then a member of the Council of Trent, and his friend Carnesecchi, saw each other for the first time after Valdés' death, and could pass an evening together, at Venice, they, as it were, vied in expressing their admiration and praise of that blessed divine.<sup>38</sup>

When Cardinal Pole declared on his deathbed, in 1558, that he had always held the Pope, and particularly the then present one, to be the true successor of St. Peter and the Vicar of Christ, and that he never had dissented from the Papal will, nor from the belief of the Roman Church, such a declaration, given in the reign of Paul IV., was by Carnesecchi deemed superfluous, not to say scandalous. He and Giulia recollect that Juán de Valdés had, neither in his testament nor in the discourses shortly before his death, made any mention of the authority of the Pope or of the succession to the apostolate of Peter, but had simply testified that he died in the same faith in which he had lived. Carnesecchi and Giulia did not question the Pope's succession to Peter's apostleship, but they believed the successors had got a more limited authority over the Church than was generally attributed to them, for they interpreted the Roman

primacy as indicative of distinction rather than of sway.<sup>39</sup> Conscious, therefore, of their own dissent from the contemporary Romanism upon the article of justification, and convinced that Pole had entertained their views, they could not but regret his last declaration, which they must have considered as apostasy or duplicity, at all events as a symptom of weakness, upon the part of a man whose death, at the first news of it, had been deplored by them as a loss to their circle of more nearly related fellow-worshippers.<sup>40</sup> Vittoria Colonna was once advised by Pole, in whom she confided as in an oracle, to believe as if by faith alone she could be saved, and to work as if her salvation depended upon her works. Although she did not then succeed to get from him any more definite opinion on justification,<sup>41</sup> still she gave him to understand that she knew him to differ from the views of the Council, when, just at the time that it decreed that article, he withdrew from Trent to a more salubrious place, feigning a catarrh.<sup>42</sup> In fact, he acknowledged to Flaminio, that the term *merits* could not properly be used of any other person than Christ.<sup>43</sup> From Viterbo, where she lived, as did also Pole, Carnesecchi and Flaminio, in December 1541, Vittoria expressed thanks to Giulia for having sent to her there Valdés' Commentary on St. Paul's epistles "so much desired by those friends, but most by herself, who needed it most;" Vittoria invited Giulia to come herself. "Certainly," she writes, "it would be convenient, that, after being so well informed on the true celestial fatherland, you revisited a little your country Lombardy, for you could also help much."<sup>44</sup> Caterina Cibo, Duchess of Camerino, likewise believed in justification by faith, conforming to Valdés' doctrine, and had evangelists recommended to her by Carnesecchi.<sup>45</sup> The Cardinals Contarini and Badia approved of the writings of Juán de Valdés.<sup>46</sup>

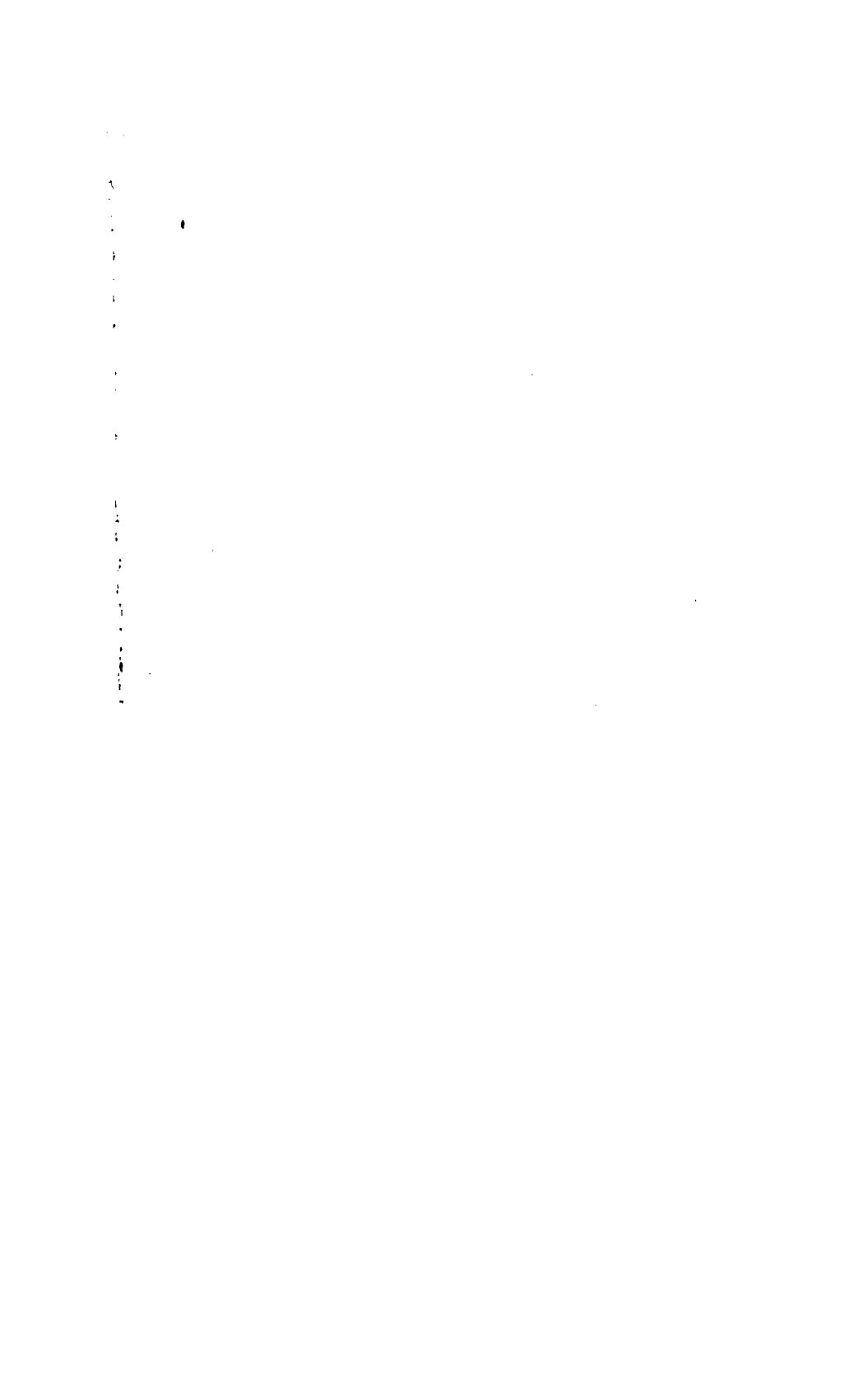
Soon after the death of Valdés, Vermiglio and Ochino

left Italy, where liberty of preaching was no longer left them. For a short period the press at Venice was still suffered to spread evangelical literature. The *Benefit of Christ* was printed there and circulated in tens of thousands of copies. About the year of the opening of the Council of Trent, 1545, several works of Juán de Valdés were published at Venice. Together with his brother's dialogue on the sack of Rome, there appeared Juán's *Dialogue between Mercury and Charon*, his *Christian Alphabet*, and seven of his tracts on the fundamental doctrines of Christianity.<sup>47</sup> In 1548 such laxity of the press was stopped. Valdés' *Considerations* were printed at Basle, where they appeared in 1550 in Italian. The Commentaries on the Romans and on the First Epistle to the Corinthians were edited in 1556-57 at Geneva.

Juán Pérez, the editor of both the Commentaries, dedicated that on the First Epistle to the Corinthians to Maximilian, the future Emperor. In this Prince's library have been preserved the MS. copies of several of Valdés' works not to be found elsewhere: the Gospel by St. Matthew, with its Commentary, the translation of the Psalms, thirty-nine of the CX Considerations, seven Doctrinal Letters, the treatise on Repentance, Faith, and Life, which all of them had to wait three hundred years before they were printed. *Valdés' Commentary on the first book of the Psalms, from the first to the forty-first, in MS. in Spanish, awaits a Mecenas to defray the expense of its publication.* When persecution became oppressive in the Neapolitan realm, some withdrew beyond the Alps,<sup>48</sup> many recanted, many suffered capital punishment. Giulia Gonzaga, who strictly kept to the faith imbibed by the guidance of Valdés and to the practice recommended her by him,<sup>49</sup> was summoned to Rome, but God by death mercifully released her from more painful and fearful experience. She died at her retreat in the Neapolitan convent, in the year 1566.

The Inquisition seized Giulia Gonzaga's papers, and found amongst them the letters which Carnesecchi, through a long series of years, had written to her. In vain he urged that the doctrine of Valdés on justification could not be considered to have been heretical until the Council had determined that it was so; that high authorities and dignitaries had adhered to it; that he himself, ever previously fluctuating in his mind, had at last acquiesced in what the Council had ultimately decreed and the Pope had approved.<sup>50</sup> He ingenuously confessed, it is true, as for the relation of inherent justice to that which is imputed, that he, not knowing exactly to discern the difference between the opinion of Valdés and the determination of the Council, was not yet quite resolved whether he ought to condemn Valdés' doctrine on this point or not; but he declared he would submit to his judges, his intention being entirely to conform himself, in this as well as in all other articles, to the orthodox Catholic faith.<sup>51</sup> On some captious question he also reminded them of his not being a theologian.<sup>52</sup> He was beheaded and burnt in 1567. Soon every spark of evangelical life within the reach of the Inquisition was stifled.<sup>53</sup>

Valdés' Commentary on the First Book of Psalms, in Spanish, is in the hands of Pastor Señor Don Manuel Carrasco.—*Editor's Note.*



*AN EPIGRAM OF DANIEL ROGERS ON THE  
DEATH OF JOHN JEWELL,  
BISHOP OF SALISBURY.*

*Inserted at the end of Lawrence Humphrey's Life and Death of Jewell,  
published by John Day, A.D. 1573.*

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**ON THE MORE PURE THEOLOGIANS [THE REFORMERS]  
OF DIFFERENT COUNTRIES.**

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The Italians will evermore assert the claims of the divine Martyr  
(Peter Martyr Vermiglio).

France may extol her Calvin to the stars.

Germany may boast and pride herself upon Melancthon,

And Luther drag, in the same triumphal car with him :

Neither may Bonn, O Bucer, forget thine honours,

She having, through thy name, gained the highest illustration.

May Zwinglius live for ever on Swiss lips,

Whilst Bullinger's memory shall never die amongst the inhabitants  
of Zurich.

Alasco's fame let it be renowned through Poland :

John Huss be celebrated through Bohemia.

Hemming's intelligent labours, let the Danes acknowledge.

May John Knox's teaching characterise all Scotland.

*Of Valdés, as an author, let all Spain be proud.*

Hyperius, let Belgian verse worthily extol.

Let every region honour the name of its own teacher,

And show itself grateful to its own preceptors.

But happy England, may she rejoice in thee, O Jewell,

And laud, in one for all, thee, her own Teacher.

## Valdés' Religious Works in English.

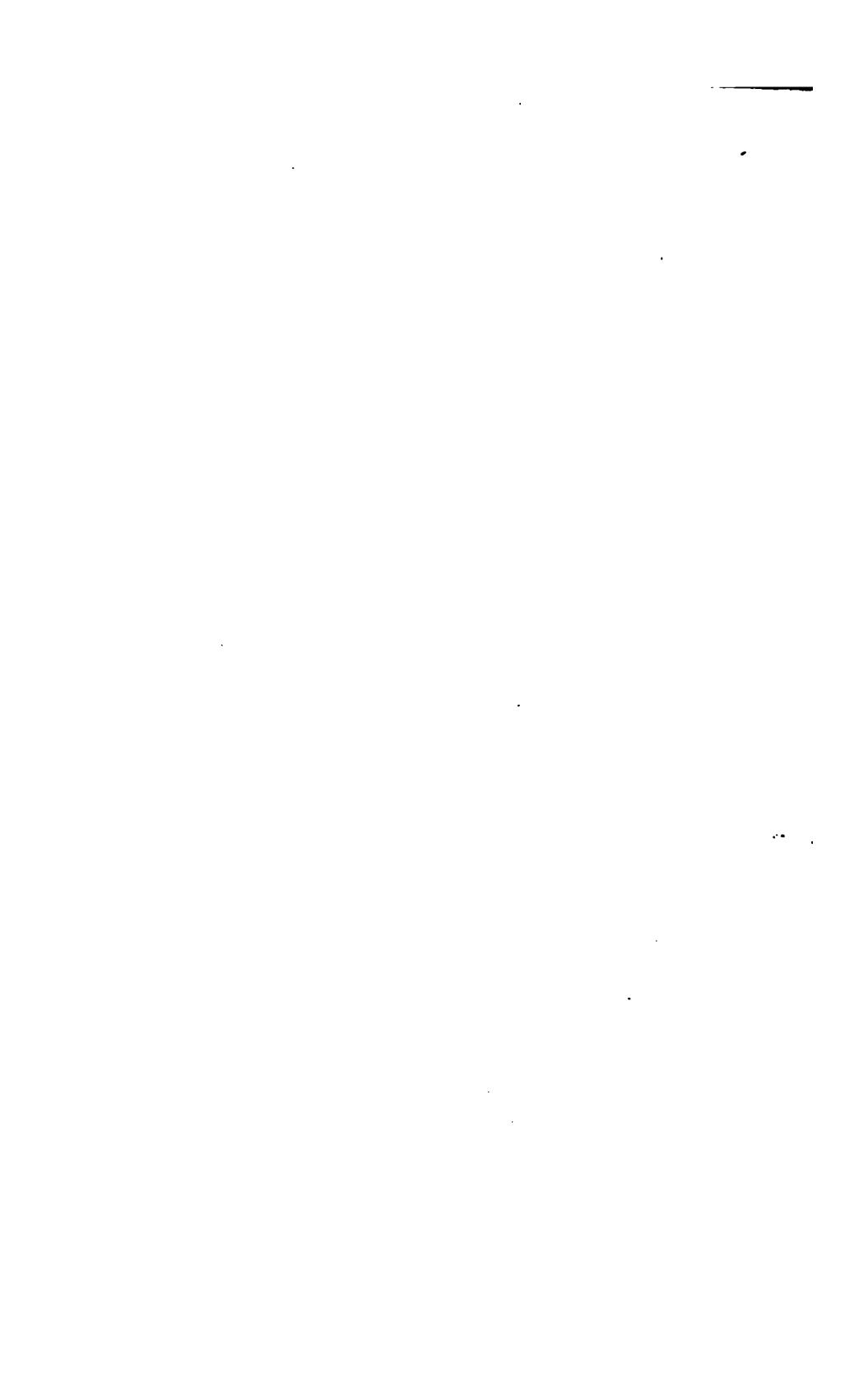
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The Editor has translated all the subjoined works, and has published them, excepting the Commentaries upon the Romans and the Corinthians.

1. "Valdés' XVII Opuscules," his recently discovered Minor Works. Price 6s.
2. "Valdés' Commentary upon St. Matthew's Gospel," with Professor Boehmer's Lives of Juán and Alfonso de Valdés. Price 7s. 6d.
3. "Valdés' Spiritual Milk;" or, Instruction for the Children of Christian Parents. Translated from the Italian (the *editio princeps*) most recently discovered by Boehmer; appended to which are his Lives. Price 2s.
4. "Three Opuscules." An extract from Valdés' Minor Works. Price 1s.
5. "Valdés' Commentary upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount." An extract from "Valdés' Commentary upon St. Matthew's Gospel," with Boehmer's Lives. Price 2s. 6d.
6. Professor Boehmer's Lives of the twin brothers, Juán and Alfonso de Valdés, with Editor's Introduction. Price 1s.
7. "Valdés' Commentary upon St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans." Price 7s. 6d.
8. "Valdés' Commentary upon the First Epistle to the Corinthians." Price 7s. 6d.

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